THE LIFE OF THOMAS VASEY.

Yours faithfully
Thomas Varey

Engraved by T. W. Hunt.

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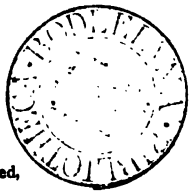
THOMAS VASEY.

BY HIS WIDOW.



" The proud he tamed, the penitent he cheered,
Nor to rebuke the rich offender feared
His preaching much, but more his practice wrought,
A living sermon of the truths he taught."

LONDON:
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
1874.

PREFACE.

IN introducing this book to the reader, we would say that it has been written with the simple desire to

ERRATA.

Page 67, line 32, *for* "our commanded duties," *read* "uncommanded duties."
" 72, lines 29 and 30, *for* "while," *read* "whole."
" 143, line 10, *for* "roused," *read* "roared."
" 199, " 31, *for* "their," *read* "there."
" 354, " 26, *for* "effort," *read* "effect."
" 359, " 19, *for* "were," *read* "are."
" 367, " 7, *for* "and thy long," *read* "in thy long."
375, " 5 from bottom, *for* "Mr. Brown's," *read* "Mr. Bourne's."

many stand points. And here we gratefully express our deep indebtedness to those who have assisted us to secure our object, by supplying us with notes both historical and critical, and to those also, who have aided us by their prayers.

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PREFACE.

In introducing this book to the reader, we would say that it has been written with the simple desire to embalm the memory of a worthy and noble man for his own sake, and for the benefit of those who may be able and disposed to profit by a good example. And though doubtless defective, let no one think that the portrait drawn is exaggerated. The concurrent testimony of a great number of witnesses, proves that the same high estimate has been formed of Mr. Vasey by many men of many minds, looking from many stand points. And here we gratefully express our deep indebtedness to those who have assisted us to secure our object, by supplying us with notes both historical and critical, and to those also, who have aided us by their prayers.

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means of giving the necessary insight into his domestic sympathies. The few sermons inserted, have not been selected as the most striking specimens of his talents, but with a view to usefulness.

The key to Mr. Vasey's life is found in the simplicity and thoroughness of his Christianity. The first was a natural characteristic, and never wore off. The last, at which he always aimed, was gained after a hard struggle. This single-hearted thoroughness often put him in opposition to the spirit of an age, which becomes daily more complex in *motive*, and more sophistical in *reason;* for he cared not that his rule of life was in some points old-fashioned, if he was sure that it was logically Christian. Few men so closely follow the line they have first laid down for themselves, especially when it involves so much self-abnegation; and we have no hesitation in saying, that ere he died, Mr. Vasey's name would have been famous, and his death reckoned a great public loss, had he devoted himself either to the cultivation of his business talents, or his intellectual powers. But he chose a nobler calling, and determined to be nothing but a "preacher of the Gospel" and a "winner of souls."

We have persevered in striving to prepare this

record in the midst of suffering and weakness, which have much delayed, and often threatened to put an end to, this labour of love, in the hope that the study of such a man, moved by such a spirit, might be made useful, not only to many of those who occupy the same position as that of Mr. Vasey, but to all who read this account. To the Triune Jehovah, who alone can accomplish this result, we dedicate it. May His blessing be added, and to His Name the glory shall be given. Amen.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND BOYHOOD.

THOMAS VASEY was born June 25th, 1814, at Halifax, in Yorkshire, and was of Wesleyan ancestry on the paternal side.

In the family Bible of his grandparents, after the notices of the births of each of their children, there occurs the following prayer:—"Amen! May their names be registered in the Lamb's Book of Life, and their inheritance be among the sanctified by faith which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. So pray their father and mother, Thomas and Mary Vasey."

His grandmother Vasey was accustomed to attend the early morning preaching of Mr. Wesley, and would walk many miles to enjoy this privilege. She was a woman of strong faith in God, and, in a love-feast, expressed her confident hope of the final salvation of the whole of her family, thus:—"I have eight children, and, by the grace of God, the devil shall not get one of them." And it is to be remarked that, though none of the family were possessed of the wealth of this world, they were all rich in faith, and all died in joyful hope of the resurrection unto eternal life.

Thomas Vasey, the eldest son of this godly woman, became a Wesleyan Minister. He was a holy and devoted man, and a zealous and successful minister. He is known to have made in writing a personal dedication of himself to God's service; and the salvation of his family was to him a matter of anxious concern. He prepared a form

of covenant in which he entered the names of himself and his wife, and of each of his children, when born; and, fearing lest the possession of riches might prove a snare to them, he prayed that they might not be rich.

He was seized with typhus fever (which proved fatal) while stationed at Colne. His death was a scene of holy triumph. He mentioned, with lively emotion, the doctrines of justification by faith, the direct witness of the Spirit, and of entire holiness, and declared he died "a witness of this great salvation." Some of his final words were:—"My faith has firm hold of Christ. I see a bright-shining light from the throne of God directly on me—my way is quite plain into the holies, through the blood of Jesus." "Tell the unsaved penitents, as my last message, to believe in Christ and He will save them by thousands." He mentioned his five young children by name, and said, "Tell them there are mansions! mansions! mansions!"

Samuel, his eldest son, who was then at Woodhouse Grove School, returning home for the funeral, took the fever, and died a month after his father.

Thomas his second boy—the subject of this biography—was only four years old when deprived of his father by death; but he cherished for his memory, through life, the deepest reverence. Thomas's earliest recollections were of the long crowd of mourners at the interment, of his mother rocking him in her grief, and of home struggles with insufficient means.

His mother was not an ordinary woman, and to her, no doubt, he owed much, both mentally and spiritually. She was possessed of great intellectual powers and energy of character, and to these she added a firm faith in God, and a warm attachment to the Methodist people, but for whom (she was wont to say) she would have died in her sins, though she had sat regularly under the ministry of another Church. She was brought to the knowledge of salvation, through faith in Christ, by means of an old nurse attached to the family, who took her to hear Mr. Wesley preach. Henceforth her whole heart was yielded up to God, and her life devoted to His service.

She maintained the simplicity in dress of the first Methodists; visited the sick, the widow, and the fatherless, and was instrumental in leading many from a death in sin to a life in holiness.

After her husband's death, Mrs. Vasey returned to Sunderland, the place of her birth, from whence she had been married, and applied herself to the task of training four young children to tread in the steps of their sainted father.

Her son Thomas required some management. He was a delicate, sensitive child, and very strong-willed. The energy which distinguished him in later life was not wanting at this early period, and rendered it a task of no small difficulty to restrain and guide him. There was in Thomas Vasey then, as afterwards, an unquenchable hatred to anything that savoured of oppression; and this often stirred in him a spirit of resistance which his mother alone could quell. She early led him, aided by the Holy Spirit, to see the deceitfulness of sin and the plague of his own heart; and he would tremble, and pray earnestly to be forgiven, when betrayed into a fit of passion.

That she had also early taught him to pray is evidenced by the following incident, which occurred to him when a little boy:—

Whilst playing at the back of Sans-street, Sunderland, he fell into a saw-pit. He was taken up, bleeding from a deep wound in the forehead, and insensible. The doctor feared fracture of the skull, and that, should he recover, his reason would be gone. For many hours he lay unconscious. At length he opened his eyes and said:—"Mother, I have forgotten to say my prayers." "Praise the Lord!" exclaimed his thankful mother; thou's not cracked yet, Tom!" The scar occasioned by this accident remained through life, and probably his constitution was permanently enfeebled by loss of blood.

His indifference to danger led him, shortly after this occurrence, again to imminent risk of his life; on this occasion, through the careless use of gunpowder, which resulted in an explosion, and but for the special care of

divine Providence, the life which afterwards proved so valuable would have been sacrificed.

At quite an early age Thomas Vasey was accustomed to attend Sabbath-school, and his sisters remember how carefully he treasured the little reward-books given him by his teacher, who took special interest in his small pupil.

When eight years old, he was sent to Woodhouse Grove School. We insert with pleasure extracts from reminiscences of his school days, furnished by Mr. J. T. Slugg, an old school companion—one who worked side by side with Thomas Vasey, and between whom and himself the most intimate friendship existed.

Mr. Slugg commences his sketch with a short reference to "Woodhouse Grove," which will not, we think, be uninteresting:—

"A traveller on the short branch of the Midland line of rails, from Bradford to Leeds, will find the train stopping at the picturesque little station of Apperley Bridge. If he alight here, and ascend into the high road, he will find himself in the neighbourhood of what appears to be a large mansion, situated amidst its grounds. The house itself will not be seen at first. If he desire to visit it, he must pass through the Lodge gates, and, taking the carriage drive to the right, will have to his left a hill, covered with trees, forming a small wooden grove; and the first sound that greets him will be the cawing of rooks. As he proceeds through the trees on the summit of the hill, he will perceive a square tower, rising to a considerable elevation.

"Before he reaches the end of the carriage drive, if it should be a little after twelve o'clock, his ears will be greeted further by the sound of the merry and boisterous voices of youths; at length he will come in sight of the mansion, with its lawn in front, sloping down to the river side, which flows at a little distance. He will notice that the original building has had wings added, and will, on inquiry, ascertain that what was once a gentleman's mansion, most delightfully situated, is now a

large scholastic establishment for the sons of Wesleyan ministers, known as Woodhouse Grove School.

"One fine summer's day, in the month of August, 1862, a greater number of travellers than usual alighted at the Apperley Bridge station, and the quiet and somewhat monotonous routine of school life, was interrupted at the Grove, where preparations had been going on for some coming event. By noon, two or three hundred strangers had arrived. There was the Attorney-General (the late Sir William Atherton), four ex-presidents of the Conference, and the governor of the school, the Rev. John Farrar, and numbers of others, both ministers and laity. What meant this assemblage, and this unusual stir? It was a gathering of old Grove boys, who had come to celebrate its jubilee, the school having been opened in 1812. And a high day—a red letter day—it was for those who met on that occasion.

"Some had not seen the dear old spot since they left it years and years ago. Old school-fellows met who had not seen each other for an equally long time. Amongst the throng of that day was one who quickly stole away to the tower on the hill spoken of, known as the 'Observatory.' There, under the first flight of stairs, on a wooden partition, he found his name engraved, and with it the name of 'T. Vasey!' How his heart throbbed with emotion, whilst he looked at these two names thus united, as those of David and Jonathan, cannot now be stated. It was, at least, thirty-four years since they were cut together by the two boys in token of friendship.

"Unfortunately 'T. Vasey' was not present at the gathering of that joyous day. The owner of the other name lives this day, and finds pleasure in the endeavour to gather together some remembrances of the school days of his dear old schoolfellow, Tom Vasey, which were spent at this hallowed spot.

"We were at Woodhouse Grove together from June, 1822, to 1828. Hence, as the school was opened in January, 1812, Vasey belonged to the third generation

of Grove boys. Then the preacher's sons were admitted at eight years of age, but were not allowed to remain after they were fourteen; so that Vasey enjoyed the fullest advantage which was then attainable as to time. During the first two years of his school days, the governor was the Rev. Miles Martindale, who, though he wielded the birch rod rather freely, was, on the whole, a great favourite with the lads. He was succeeded by the Rev. John Stamp, a disciplinarian of the strictest sort. Though I believe Vasey never came directly under any pains and penalties of his infliction, yet had he to suffer, in conjunction with the other boys. One occasion I will instance:—On two mornings a week the boys had oatmeal porridge for breakfast. It was prepared in a large boiler in the scullery; near to this boiler stood that useful receptacle, known as the swill tub. One of the boys, having occasion to pass through the scullery, made it known in the school that he had seen the wooden ladle, with which the porridge was served out, in the said tub. Great was the indignation. To think of eating porridge served out with such a ladle! It must not be submitted to. A spirit of rebellion soon spread through the school; and it was rashly resolved on the next porridge morning no one should eat it. Accordingly, when the monitors, bringing a plateful in each hand, presented them to the first boys—'Not any for me,' was the response, and so on to the youngest. The foolish lads supposed that the only result would be they would have to go *minus* a breakfast; but, to their astonishment, the porridge was again brought in at dinner-time, to be again refused, and so at the six o'clock meal, known as supper, the poor lads went hungry to bed. The next morning they were summoned to prayers at eight o'clock. The boys were accustomed to repeat the Lord's Prayer audibly after the governor; on this occasion, however, not a single voice was heard until he came to the petition, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' when was heard such a loud, hearty utterance, as was fairly startling. But it was not until the middle of the second

day that the lads gave in. In all this Vasey stood by his companions, and showed as much pluck as any of them.

"The headmaster of the school, during the whole of the six years, was Samuel Ebenezer Parker, a genius and a scholar, and an extraordinary man. He could be severe when a boy needed it, but at other times was the opposite. His devotion to the welfare of the boys was great. Under his guidance, before he was fourteen years of age, Vasey had read Virgil, Cicero's *Orations*, Ovid, Horace, Zenophon, and the Greek Testament. More than this, Mr. Parker was a very efficient science teacher. During the last two years of Vasey's residence at the Grove, he was thus privileged in receiving lessons from Mr. Parker in chemistry, optics, astronomy, mechanics, hydrostatics, hydraulics, pneumatics, &c.; and those were not the only advantages which he, with his compeers, derived from the tutorship of Samuel Parker. The latter took a very active interest in the spiritual welfare of the boys.

"As headmaster, he resided at some distance from the school, and was not expected to overlook the boys when in the playground after school. It was his custom, however, to remain for an hour or more after his duties (which terminated at five o'clock in summer) were over, to hold a prayer meeting in the chapel with as many of the boys as would attend. He had great power in prayer, and many of the boys seemed to catch his fervour. During the last two years of Vasey's school-days, he was found frequently at these meetings, and there received impressions which never left him probably. Parker encouraged those boys, who were at any time under religious impressions, to open their minds to him, and write letters to him. I do not remember that Vasey professed to have been converted at the Grove; but that he was brought under religious impressions, through the instrumentality of Mr. Parker, is certain.

"Frequently the preparation of our lessons would not occupy all the time allowed for it, and the spare time

was employed, boy-fashion, in trying to amuse one another; but Vasey would never indulge in any occupation till the lesson was well mastered.

"He had a fertile imagination, and possessed the inventive faculty very largely. After we had mastered our lessons, we used to try to amuse each other by the narration of original tales, full of the marvellous, &c. In this he was very successful. I remember how I used to wonder however he conjured up all the wonderful things he narrated; and how ashamed I was at the feebleness of my own efforts, after his. He was particularly fond of this exercise."

Mr. Slugg continues:—"No wonder that Mr. Vasey became a successful advocate of Christian Missions, since he made his first Missionary speech when he was little more than thirteen years of age.

"I have now before me a manuscript book (the book made and the contents written by myself whilst at the school), containing a verbatim report of a Missionary meeting held in the then dining-room of Woodhouse Grove, in November, 1827. The chair was taken by the junior master, Mr. John Meek. There were, besides the vote of thanks to the chairman, five resolutions, in support of each of which three boys spoke. The fifteen speakers, giving their names in the order in which they spoke, were: Chas. Pemnan, T. Lee, David McNicoll, Thomas Vasey, Wm. France, J. Neap, Joshua Crowther (a son of the first Jonathan Crowther, the friend and coadjutor of Wesley), Jas. Evans, Jos. Manor, Josiah I. Slugg, Rd. Davies, James Vasey, Thos. Padman, Wm. Meek, J. France.

"My manuscript commences thus:—'The report having been read, and Jno. Meek having taken the chair at the request of the secretary, Tommy Vasey, the boys proceeded thus.' I find at the end of my manuscript a table of the time each boy took in delivering his speech. From this table I see that Vasey's speech occupied ten minutes, being, with the exception of one which occupied thirteen minutes, the longest of the fifteen.

I may quote the first and last sentences of Vasey's speech. It commences :—

"'It is with feelings of deepest interest I now rise to speak a few words on behalf of this important cause—a cause which has long had the sanction and blessing of that God who has said, "I will give the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." And indeed who can for a moment think without pity on the many thousands of our fellow-creatures in the West Indies, who, though descended from the same stock as ourselves, and only differing from us by some slight shades of complexion, are, notwithstanding, doomed to suffer the rigours of a hard and perpetual slavery.'"

Mr. Slugg says :—"I ought to have said that Vasey moved the second resolution, which was: 'That the moral degradation of the many thousands of the subjects of the British, both in the East and West Indies, has an urgent claim on the prayers and benevolence of every real Christian.' He closes thus: 'Let us ascend the high ground of prophecy, to derive from its assurances the materials for our prayers, and the motives for our efforts. The Son of God must and shall destroy the works of the devil. Falsehood, sensuality, and cruelty must be banished from our world by the truth, purity, and benevolence of the Gospel. The Shaster must vanish before the Bible, the Crescent fade before the Cross, and the banner of the Redeemer wave in triumph over scenes polluted by superstition and darkened by ignorance. If the Missionary cause be the cause of God, it must be supported. The obligation is personal, and if not discharged will prove a weight of aggravation, which will sink us lower and lower in the abyss of hell.'

"I am bound in all honesty, in reference to the composition of the fifteen speeches, to acknowledge that the Wesleyan magazines were accessible to the boys, and that for some weeks previous to the meeting the intended speakers were often seen conning over the

various Missionary addresses reported in them. These speeches were all written and committed to memory. Hence my verbatim report was got together by borrowing the copies of the speeches.

"It was during our last twelve months at the Grove that the closest intimacy existed between Vasey and myself. During the whole of that time I cannot remember a word or an action of his which was not consistent with the strictest propriety. His conduct was strictly moral. He had, for a boy, a high sense of honour, and the natural disposition of his mind seemed to be raised above everything mean or low. His mother was a widow, and I well remember the terms of solicitude and affection in which he used to speak of her. In this, as in some other things, he seemed to be above his years.

"Although he was not a rough, romping boy, always maintaining, as compared with other boys, a certain sobriety and refinement of behaviour, yet he was very spirited and fond of fun, and in those early days enjoyed a quiet joke. He happened to be four days older than myself, and often teased me; playfully accounting for his being four days older, on the ground that he was attracted into the world by the music which was being played in the streets at the time, in celebration of the Peace just declared.

"He displayed great earnestness of purpose. This quality, I call to mind, used to manifest itself in his conversation as to his future career. At the very early age of thirteen or fourteen he seemed to entertain more sober views of the realities of life, and its battles and toils, than is usual with boys of his age. He appeared even then to be resolved, that to whatever pursuit he should be devoted, he would try to raise himself in it."

Mr. J. T. Waterhouse, Honolulu, another schoolfellow and friend, writes :—"My recollections of Thomas Vasey are very vivid and fragrant. He was an honest, truthful, frank, whole-souled boy, and a model of propriety, as well as of industry, at his studies.

"In playing at cricket, racing, and jumping, he would struggle to be first, and the same applied to his race in mental attainments. With such an iron will, it is no wonder he obtained the highest position in school.

"I shall never forget, while memory lasts, the sensation produced on myself, and I think the whole school, at his narrow escape from death. Shortly after the vacation of 1825, when the lads were bathing in the River Aire, a sudden rush of water in the stream took his brother James out of his depth. Thomas plunged after him, and got into the same critical position. They were drowning, when the Rev. John Farrar took off his coat, and just as he was, gave an immense leap over many of our heads into the water, and rescued them from certain death. My thankfulness at the time for this deliverance appears as fresh as if it were yesterday, although forty-six years have since then rolled into eternity. I remember its effects well; for it was my first home-thrust, 'Prepare to meet thy God.'"

Other characteristics of the school life of Thomas Vasey may be mentioned, viz., his habit of defending the younger and weaker portion of his associates, and his readiness to show fight when occasion offered. He was accustomed to recount to his own children his exploits at the Grove with a dagger, which he had made and smeared with his own blood for the purpose. Nor did he conceal that occasionally he came into dire collision with his masters during the earlier years of his school career. A blow from a cane would in a moment rouse all the rebellion in his nature, which sometimes made itself both seen and felt. It would not seem, however, that punishment on his part was often required.

He also related how he first acquired the power of self-denial, which, though he exemplified it so habitually and strikingly throughout the whole of his future life, was not natural to him.

Whilst at school, he was one day enjoying greatly a cake given him, when he observed one of his companions eyeing him wistfully. After an internal struggle,

the cake was divided, and from that time it was his principle to deny himself for the benefit of others.

The fact, that for two years he occupied the position of head boy at Woodhouse Grove, is significant of his persevering diligence and talents as a student. And that he left with a high character, is indicated by an entry in the School Register, which he lighted upon thirty years afterwards whilst Secretary to the Woodhouse Grove Committee. It was to this effect: after his own name and the date of his leaving "the Grove," was added by the pen of the Governor, the Rev. John Stamp, "With much credit to himself."

We think no one can read these notices of the childhood and schooldays of Thomas Vasey without marking the gradual unfolding of those qualities of heart and mind which disposed and also empowered him to turn to good account the advantages with which he was favoured at that period; and which being in later years sanctified by the grace of the Lord Jesus, and unreservedly dedicated to his service, constituted him a minister "thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

CHAPTER II.

SPIRITUAL BIRTH AND MINISTERIAL CALL.

At fourteen, Thomas Vasey became a clerk in the office of Mr. Hugh Panton, Sunderland, a gentleman engaged in many branches of business. And soon his capabilities were taxed by duties previously discharged by a clever adult person. But, with characteristic energy and decision, he applied himself to the mastery of the difficulties which met him in his new position; and by the exercise of his persevering, self-reliant spirit, and the faithful use of his talents, he was enabled to acquit himself to the complete satisfaction of his employer, and thus gained an aptitude for general business, which was invaluable to him in the emergencies of his future life.

At the termination of his school career, he had made the heroic determination to maintain himself independently of aid from his widowed mother; and as his income was small, the carrying out of this resolve involved no trifling amount of self-denial. From this, however, there was no shrinking. He contented himself with frugal fare, and submitted to that which was infinitely more trying, viz., the wearing of clothes (which then included corduroys) provided by "the Grove" to leaving boys, much beyond the usual time of service. In later life, Mr. Vasey was accustomed to tell his own children, he did not cost his mother a penny after leaving school, and to refer to the deep mortification he endured when he could not afford to dress like his companions, his rule being to wear no article of clothing until paid for.

He considered that the experience of these earlier years contributed greatly to the formation of his character. *Vincit qui se vincit* is a proverb of deep and wide

meaning. He who gains the victory over self acquires at the same time the ability to influence others, and it cannot be doubted that these early trials were calculated, in one so constituted, to foster and develope that power of self-government (possessed in so great a degree by Thomas Vasey) which enables the possessor to govern others as well as himself.

Business now engaged his first attention. But he was still a student at heart, and did not fail to avail himself of every opportunity and resource for mental improvement. He had laid a firm foundation of sound scholarship at Woodhouse Grove, and had there "acquired habits and aptitudes" which, with his rich natural endowments, urged and aided him in the pursuit of higher intellectual attainments. Mr. Vasey had a very warm appreciation of the quality of the teaching he had enjoyed at school. But the best education afforded at Woodhouse Grove did not satisfy his mental cravings. His mind had expanded with the acquisition of knowledge, and was now open to many sources of interest and effort. During his life in Sunderland, he became intimate with the son of a banker there, and having kindred aspirations, they agreed to write essays on given subjects for mutual improvement. They took opposite sides, and Mr. Vasey's sisters, to whom the papers were submitted for perusal, testify that they were deeply interesting and instructive. One they particularly remember was "On the propriety or otherwise of introducing Classical Authors into high class Female Education." Mr. Vasey also regularly read classics with a Cambridge student.

But the time was at hand when infinitely more important interests and pursuits were to occupy his thoughts and time. Up to nearly the age of seventeen he was only pursuing head knowledge. He had now, by the work of the Holy Spirit, to gain some heart knowledge —to be led to know himself as a sinner needing God's mercy. This was to him a deeply painful and humiliating process. From childhood he had feared God, and had outwardly led a pure and upright life. He had won

a high character—his self-respect was dear to him—and he had within him the consciousness of superior mental power. He had often been the subject of deep religious impressions, and now his convictions of the necessity of a thorough change of heart were not the result of any special sermon. The influence and associations of his early life and training; his father's prayers, his mother's guidance, the efforts of his teachers, and the ordinary means of grace, all combined, accompanied by the direct teaching and leadings of the Holy Spirit, to bring him to religious decision.

Now commenced a conflict long and severe. Mr. Vasey occasionally alluded to the deep soul struggles through which he passed, when his secret sins were set before him in the light of God's countenance, and he was led to seek salvation. His naturally proud, self-helpful spirit kept him long at a distance from God, and prevented him getting into that posture of humility before Him, in which alone He will reveal Himself as reconciled to a poor sinner through Christ.

A short account of this most important crisis, furnished by one of Mr. Vasey's sisters, and a few extracts from a diary kept by him for a few months after conversion, will best illustrate the thoroughness and clearness of the change then wrought in his heart, and the immediate effect of it in his daily life and experience.

Mr. Vasey's sister says:—"One special Sunday night, after service at Sans-street Chapel, my brother asked me to go down to Burleigh Street prayer meeting with him. I knew he was anxious about his salvation and accompanied him. He at once went forward amongst the penitents, as he himself said, 'to do what I could to break the pride of my heart.' This he felt to be his greatest hindrance. He knelt for a considerable time, in the deepest distress, but obtained no relief. At ten we went home in silence, except the penitential sobbing and heart breathing for God's mercy. As soon as he entered the house he fell down upon his knees, and we all joined in pleading for pardon until he fainted, and about midnight

he had to be assisted to bed. The struggle was not over. For five or six weeks longer he had to learn the way of salvation; that the gate was strait, and the way narrow, and no mere seeker could enter. After much agonizing striving, whilst in his own room at East Street, his burden rolled into the sepulchre."

On that memorable occasion Mr. Vasey wrote thus:—"Sunderland, March 11, 1831.—This night I can claim God as my Father reconciled through Christ. I feel as though heaven had sprung up in my heart. I had attended the Band meeting at eight o'clock, and there I felt the influence of God to pervade my soul. I had long been seeking the blessing of justification (about two months), and occasionally I felt much of the power of God operating on my mind, but I had to lament how feeble were my resolves, and even, though I trust I made them not without prayer to God for His blessing and grace, yet at times I felt as though Satan would finally gain the ascendancy. But, when I was enabled to look unto God, I felt that through His help I should overcome the enemy. While singing in the Band room, 'Visit then thy new creation,' &c., I was led into such a contemplation of the glories of heaven as almost overpowered me; I longed to 'read my title clear to mansions in the sky.' I retired to my closet, and there poured out my whole soul in prayer to Him who alone could give me the desire of my heart. My spirit was led to contemplate the glories of the eternal world; the happy employment of holy angels; and the never-ending eternity of bliss that was there laid up in store for the children of God. I saw then, as it were, Christ the Son of God leaving this heavenly glory, and veiling Himself in our flesh; as enduring the scoffs and persecutions of wicked men; and as finally suffering the death of the Cross, and all this that wretched, undone, guilty sinners might have a way whereby they might be saved. I was overwhelmed with astonishment; I saw how I had been dishonouring God with my unbelieving fears; I felt a strong confidence swell in my breast, that after such an amazing condescension of love those might have strong

hope who fled for refuge to lay hold on the Cross. I felt my doubts to be dispelled, and an overwhelming sense of the love of God to fill my breast. I prayed for more, and uttered in my heart with feelings of intense desire, 'Enlarge my faith's capacity,' &c. I felt assured in my own mind that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins, but I was afraid to declare it unto men. I thought that, perhaps, I should be presumptuous, and I prayed with earnest faith that I might have confidence. I paused for about a minute, and then I felt the answer to my prayer. I rose up encouraged and refreshed. My soul was filled with love and joy and peace in believing. With difficulty I could get down stairs; my soul was transported; I felt that the intercession of Christ stamped a value and efficacy on my feeble petitions, which ensured the answer of them—and as we had been singing in the Bands, I was 'lost in wonder, love, and praise.' May I ever live to praise Him, and be enabled by His grace to devote my future life to His glory. I now close with the words of the Psalmist, 'I will both lay me down in peace,' for thou, Lord, dost sustain me. Amen, Amen!"

He who attains to the enjoyment of the love of God in his soul, feels constrained to make known his joyful experience, and thankfully avails himself of every medium for the sustenance and progress of the new life within him. Under the influence of his new found happiness, Thomas Vasey immediately sought union with the people of God. On the day succeeding the night he received the assurance of God's forgiving mercy, he joined the class of Mr. Kimpster. In doing this he resolved that, in giving expression to his experience, he would avoid all conventional phraseology, and that he would not quote Scripture, or verses of hymns; not because he disliked such quotations, but, lest he should be betrayed into the utterance of something meant to satisfy those about him, rather than the real representation of his state and feelings. He desired to be honest with himself and with God, and to be preserved from anything like self-deception. And, as he

commenced his Christian course so he continued it. Sincerity and straightforwardness were strikingly apparent in all that Thomas Vasey did or said. Everything was reality with him without or within. He never wore borrowed plumes, nor appeared what he was not. Even in his thoughts he would not harbour that which was false, but ever strove to keep a "conscience void of offence toward God and toward man."

He soon found work to do in the cause of the Saviour. He had passed through the preparatory process, which, whatever might be his vocation, fitted him for a career of usefulness in the Church and in the world. The religion of Jesus unites all our purposes, aims, and actions to one great end. Henceforth, mental attainments were no longer of paramount importance to Thomas Vasey. His hours of business toil were long, and his health feeble; but his opportunities for getting or doing good were diligently improved. He carefully availed himself of all the means of grace public and private, became a tract distributor, and Sunday-school teacher, and as a prayer leader and visitor of the sick he traversed the lanes and alleys of the town, straining his scanty means to the utmost in affording temporal relief to those who were in need.

It is believed that from the period of conversion he ever retained the consciousness of the Divine power. He was faithful to Christ, and pursued with earnestness the Apostolic injunction, "Wherefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ let us go on to perfection," &c.

The records of his diary reveal the aspirations of his newly emancipated soul. Holiness and usefulness were the objects of his most ardent desires, and from that time he set himself resolutely to overcome every obstacle in the path upon which he had entered. He prepared in the strength of Jesus to tread in the straight and narrow road, to follow closely in the footsteps of the Saviour, no matter how rugged, or steep, or thorny might be the way, or how much obstructed by foes; and soon he found that if he would proceed he must gird himself for the

conflict. "In every believer's heart there is a struggle between the old and the new nature." This Thomas Vasey soon found to his cost. The lofty spirit, which, when in distress on account of sin, had delayed him in coming to the Cross, now at the outset of his Christian course occasioned him many a hard battle. He was not of ordinary mould, with his bold, unflinching, and lion-like heart, and was destined to no common service in the army of the King of kings. He had in him the material of which generals are made, and if he was to lead others he must first serve in the ranks, must be disciplined himself to prompt obedience, and accustomed to the endurance of "forced marches and hard service." Many a hand to hand conflict must be fought, and many a victory won before he would be prepared to take his place as a leader in the battle of the Lord of Hosts against the armies of the alien.

His diary also manifests the seriousness and determination with which he, though so young, commenced the Christian conflict:—

"Saturday, March 12th, 1831.—This morning I awoke with a sweet sense of the favour of God, and I have been enabled to maintain it through the whole of the day. I felt great confidence whilst communicating to my leader, Mr. Kimpster, the wondrous work God had wrought in my soul. I felt at the beginning of the day much of my own insufficiency to war the Christian's warfare, but I was strengthened from on high with greater power over sin. Whilst reading in the Psalms this passage was impressed on my mind, 'I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: open thy mouth wide and I will fill it.' I do feel encouraged to ask of my heavenly Father for a larger baptism of His Holy Spirit, that I may grow in grace from day to day till I attain to the fulness of the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus. May the Lord grant it for Jesu's sake. Amen."

"Saturday, March 19th, 1831.—The Lord has graciously kept my mind in peace this day, and I have not

been brought into bondage by my temper so much as I have formerly been. I trust by constantly watching over this and praying against it that I shall be able to mortify it."

"Wednesday, March 23rd, 1831.— . . . . Got much encouraged from reading *Romaine's Life of Faith.* I see that I must pray often and earnestly in order to keep my faith in constant and lively exercise: that every spiritual blessing which is promised in the Gospel is ready to be communicated in answer to the prayer of faith; that I am even dishonouring God by not praying to Him for such blessings, as He has professed Himself willing to communicate," &c. . . .

"Thursday, March 24th, 1831.—I have to-night felt much comfort in prayer, and have had this scripture applied to my mind, Will He not, with His Son, 'also freely give us all things?' With the gift of His Son, He gave us the greatest boon in His power to bestow, and since He has done that all the minor blessings of His grace lie open and ready to be bestowed in plentiful abundance, in answer to the prayer of faith; and how dishonouring it is to the character of God when believers, who have experienced His willingness to save to the uttermost, for a moment give way to a doubting spirit. How many blessings are lost by this base mistrusting both the word and power and truth of God. May the Lord ever increase that faith in me, which is His peculiar gift, and my greatest treasure.

"Wednesday, March 30th, 1831.—. . . . I have felt much encouragement and confidence in God, whilst commending my temporal circumstances to Him. I believe it is my privilege to ask for temporal blessings at His hands, though I do feel resigned to His will, and I trust that I shall be enabled to glorify Him as much in adversity as in prosperity. My all is not laid here, and whilst my treasure and my heart are in heaven, I need not feel much anxiety how I get over the few years I have to spend here. My prayer is that my temporal circumstances may be those in which I may most glorify God.

"Wednesday, April 6th, 1831.—To-day the Lord has

preserved my soul in peace, and I have been in a great measure able to subdue sin. I feel that I have now more power over sin, and more faith in God, and love toward Him, than when I at first believed. . . . My sufficiency is of the Lord, who is a sufficient Saviour. May He dwell in me richly, and may His grace reign and rule in my heart. May my own will be sweetly lost in His, and may I be enabled, through all the varied trials and dangers of life, so to glorify my God below, as that I may at last find my way to heaven. . . . Oh that every root of bitterness might be destroyed in my soul, that I may be emptied of self and everything that exalteth itself against the dominion of Christ, and then filled with all His communicable fulness.

"Saturday, April 9th, 1831.—In the morning I was led to reflect on the comfort of riches and wealth, and I discovered a kind of wish arising in my mind to enjoy a little more of this world's goods; but I reflected that I should not be happy even with riches unless I had the love of God in my heart, and with that I could be content in any station.

"Sunday, April 10th, 1831.—In looking back on the day I feel humbled before God on account of my shortcomings. In the morning I felt comfort and influence whilst praying for a good and profitable Sabbath. Mr. —— preached in Sans Street Chapel in the morning from two texts on the Sacrament, and really he had so little liberty and solemnity of manner that I felt very much irritated, and sat hearing him impatiently till he was done. On returning home I felt my mind grieved and pained when I reflected on the inefficiency of his sermon. . . .

"Wednesday, April 27th, 1831.—To-day I have been led to see how unworthy I am in the sight of God, what an unprofitable servant I am, what a cold-hearted follower of Christ. I am impatient, self-confident, ignorant, and forward. How little fruit have I yet brought forth; for all the pains that the Lord has taken to cultivate my soul, how weak has been my faith. I trust, by God's grace, to set out anew for His kingdom, and to mistrust

self. I am willing that the Lord should be exalted in my salvation, and everything of self to be abased. Oh that He would make a vessel fitted for the Master's use!

"Saturday, April 30th, 1831.—. . . . I got home at 8 p.m., and went to private prayer and reading the scriptures, etc., which was very profitable. I am determined, by the help of God, to commence my Sundays on the Saturday evening, and to prepare my mind by meditation and prayer for the duties of the Sabbath. I feel more than ever what a privilege it is that we have one day in seven set apart for the worship of Jehovah. I feel a longing desire for the approach of the Sabbath, bringing as it does so many precious privileges with it.

"Thursday, May 5th, 1831.—To-day my mind has been, upon the whole, preserved in peace. I do feel an impatience of temper, which troubles me much, and on account of which I am frequently humbled before God. I rejoice to think that I have lately had more power over it, but I think it will require a mighty effort of grace to get the final victory over it. I am sometimes overcome by it most unexpectedly; a word spoken, that displeases me, sometimes seems as though it would set me on fire. I know that this is the working of the carnal mind, which keeps me in bondage, but having, in a considerable degree, overcome it, I trust to see it all destroyed. . . .

"Sunday, May 8th, 1831.—. . . . I heard Mr. ——; his sermon was very short, and miserably deficient in that sterling substance and pith which is so desirable in a preacher of the Gospel, but partly the fault may have been in myself. . . .

"Monday, May 16th, 1831.—. . . . I do feel that I am perfect weakness, that nothing that I do can be pleasing to God unless the Holy Spirit enable me to do it aright. I see now more clearly than I have done that my trust must be in God alone, not in feeling, not in myself, not entirely in means, but in God alone. . . .

"Sunday, May 22nd, 1831.—I am rejoiced this morning that the Lord has spared me to see another Sabbath day. After all the trouble and temptations and bustle of

the week, here is a day of rest. What a type of that eternal rest that remains for us above. I desire to improve this day as though it were my last, to devote it entirely to the service of God, and so shut out every worldly thought. In the ironworks' prayer meeting this morning the Lord was present, and that to bless us. How sweet is the communion of saints on the Lord's-day morning. Everything in nature wears a smiling aspect —the birds are chirping their praises, and all creation seems to enjoy the day of rest. How pleasant is it to join in the general song of gratitude, and to worship towards the holy temple of the Creator. . . .

"Sunday, May 29th, 1831.—. . . . I have thought that, being the son of a minister, and having enjoyed many peculiar privileges, I am called to improve them proportionably, and I believe it is the will of God, if I strive to work together with Him, to make me peculiarly holy and eminently useful. . . .

"Thursday, June 2nd, 1831.—I have felt Satan working upon the corruptions of my thoughts to-day, and, before I was aware, I found that I had conceived anger and evil thoughts in my mind, but I bless God that, though they do dwell there, I strive against them daily, and am in continual enmity with them. I want to have my soul emptied entirely of all that is contrary to God, and filled with all His fulness. . . .

"Thursday, August 4th, 1831.—Satan has been trying to take away my good resolutions to-day. I had just half-an-hour after I had done dinner, which I intended to set apart for private prayer. Satan threw a book in my way, which had some strong temptation for me to read it. I laid it aside at first, but meeting with it shortly afterwards, I took it up, and from that I got so engrossed with it that I only had five minutes left. I went into private for a few moments. I have learned from this the necessity of having both body and mind in subjection, that I may have power to employ either in the service of God. . . ."

We think that no one, reading the foregoing records,

can fail to be impressed with Mr. Vasey's habits of prayerfulness, vigilance and self-scrutiny; nor, also, with the steadfastness of purpose with which he set himself to do battle with the enemy of souls, and the evils still existing in his own heart, at this early date of his religious experience.

In his lecture on the necessity and right method of self-examination, Foster remarks, that "one cause of the deficiency of self-knowledge is a fear of having the full truth disclosed." "But now," he says, "think a moment of the absurd and pernicious operation of such fear. To fear that the suspected evil may reach further and deeper than the signs distinctly betray: therefore, be careful to keep the alarm less than the evil may be! To fear the suspected evil in reference to its ultimate effects and consequences, and rather to venture those consequences than firmly to look to see whether we are approaching them! . . . . In short, to resign and abandon ourselves to be all that we fear, rather than encounter the self-manifestation and the discipline necessary for a happy change!" Thomas Vasey was not one of this class; he did not shrink to search the hidden recesses of his inmost being, nor to sound its profoundest depths, so that he might ascertain the sources of his own weakness and spring of his motives and aims. And this he did in the light of God's revealed will and requirements. This honest dealing with the soul commends itself to the practice of every Christian, since it prevents self-deception, and supplies the reasons for watchfulness and prayer, lest he should retard or frustrate the operations of the Holy Spirit in his heart by weakly yielding to temptation, or by cherishing in his soul some secret sin. By this habit of self-analyzation, at the commencement of his religious life, Thomas Vasey doubtless laid the foundation of the transparency, simplicity, and purity which so pre-eminently distinguished his Christian character.

Note, also, how George Herbert teaches the duty of self-examination:—

"By all means, use sometimes to be alone.
Salute thyself: see what thy soul doth wear.
Dare to look in thy chest; for 'tis thy own:
And tumble up and down what thou find'st there.
Who cannot rest till he good fellows finde,
He breaks up house, turns out of doors his minde.

* * * * * *

"Summe up at night what thou hast done by day;
And in the morning, what thou hast to do,
Dresse and undresse thy soul: mark the decay
And growth of it: if with thy watch, that too
Be down, then winde up both, since we shall be
Most surely judg'd, make thy accounts agree."

Mr. Vasey's daily journal discloses also such habits of thought and intelligent perceptions of Divine things as are seldom met with in a youth of seventeen.

A new sphere was now to be entered upon, in the order of Divine Providence. At seventeen his health became seriously affected. Inflammation of the lungs brought him almost to the gates of death, and left symptoms threatening consumption, so that a removal from Sunderland was deemed necessary.

A visit to Croft proving beneficial, a situation was secured for him in the Bank at Darlington, and thither, accordingly, he removed, and entered upon the occupation of a house, with his eldest sister as his companion and housekeeper.

We learn, from a letter written whilst he was enjoying relaxation at Croft, that during this time the companion of his walks was his Greek Testament. This might be considered the commencement of an unbroken fellowship. It was his habit daily to exercise himself in this volume, and it was his *vade mecum* for the whole of his ministerial life.

At Darlington he quickly won for himself a lucrative and confidential position, and a high social *status*. He had a choice circle of friends, whom he delighted to gather round him, and, even in these days, showed a great fondness for the society of young people, and a desire to promote their welfare and happiness. He was also remarkable for the affectionate solicitude which he

always manifested towards his mother and sisters. Neither was he, whilst discharging the duties of this life with ardour and success, negligent of spiritual obligations, personal and relative. He maintained not only the profession, but the experience and practice of piety in himself, and endeavoured, according to his talents and opportunities, to bring others to an acquaintance with the same blessed source of happiness, peace, and usefulness.

We insert, with pleasure, recollections of Mr. Vasey's sojourn at Darlington, kindly supplied by friends of this date. The letter subjoined is from a gentleman who was for some time an inmate of his house :—

STOCKTON-ON-TEES, *December 4th*, 1871.

MRS. VASEY, HARROGATE,

DEAR MADAM,—In compliance with your request, I will endeavour to reduce to writing a few reminiscences of your late husband, my old and much esteemed friend.

It would be about the year 1836, when I first remember Mr. Vasey. He was then cashier in a bank at Darlington, and highly respected for his indefatigable industry, rectitude of conduct, and acknowledged ability; and also admired for the solicitude and affection he ever showed to his widowed mother, his sisters, and brother.

He was at that time, or shortly afterwards became, a Wesleyan Local Preacher; and his ministrations were eagerly welcomed and highly appreciated in the surrounding villages; and I believe they resulted in much good. His sermons were remarkable for an amount of learning, a soundness of doctrine, an originality of thought, and a depth of practical religious teaching and feeling seldom combined in the early discourses of so young a man; while his speeches on the platform in support of Foreign Missions and other benevolent objects were of a character so high, and prepared after such research and with so much care, that I think I have never, either before or since, heard them equalled.

In the early part of the year 1839, I became a member of Mr. Vasey's family, and resided under his roof until he broke up his house to undergo the toils and encounter the hardships incidental to a Wesleyan minister's life. During this period (and it may appear almost superfluous to all who have had the privilege of enjoying the friendship of Mr. Vasey, and of meeting him in the domestic circle, to say so) I was treated by my late friend with the greatest consideration and affection; and although I have, through circumstances, seen comparatively little of him for many years, I still look back to those early days with much satisfaction and pleasure, and frequently call to mind with gratitude the good advice and lessons, both secular and religious, by example as well as by precept, I then learned from him, and which I hope I shall never forget.

His genial disposition and the interest and kindness he always manifested to young people, ever rendered him a favourite with them; while the purity of his life and conversation commanded their respect, and recommended, in its most pleasing aspect, the religion, of which he was the ardent minister, to their adoption. When Mr. Vasey finally made up his mind, under a deep sense of duty, and in obedience, I believe, to a Divine call to preach the Gospel, and, consequently, to abandon commercial pursuits, he was (so to speak) on the high way to fortune; his well-known integrity and ability, his industry and his powers of work, opened out to him prospects which must have resulted in his gaining a high position, social, commercial, and public, in the town and district—the sacrifice he then made always appeared to me a perfect exemplification of obedience to the precept of our Saviour to the rich young man, to sell all and follow Him; as, before leaving Darlington, Mr. Vasey realised all his property, and divided the proceeds amongst the members of his family, merely reserving for himself his library, and funds sufficient to carry him to his first circuit, Exeter. Under these circumstances, with so much to be gained by perseverance in commercial pursuits, and with all the opportunities afforded by the Wesleyan system for preaching the Gospel, and doing good publicly as a layman, many of his friends thought he missed the path of duty in going out as a travelling preacher. I humbly acknowledge that such was my opinion at the time, though I have since, on many occasions, seen my error, and felt by how much higher a standard than mine was Mr. Vasey influenced. A Churchman myself, I have always watched Mr. Vasey's distinguished ministerial career with deep interest and satisfaction. I have never missed an opportunity of hearing him preach, and had that privilege on many occasions—at Middlesborough, Harrogate, and North Shields (and last in this town). On every occasion I felt deeply impressed by his remarkable earnestness, zeal, and power, as well as by the wisdom, knowledge of human nature, and love of souls his discourses evidenced.

It is a pleasing reflection to me that, on the occasion of his last visit to Stockton, Mr. Vasey called on me on the Sunday afternoon, and in company with his host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Appleton, took supper at my house, after the evening service, when, although evidently suffering from the over-exertion of his pulpit efforts, his wonted cheerfulness and playfulness (as of old) manifested themselves; while, in conducting family prayers, his earnest and affectionate petitions for my wife, my family, and myself, amongst others, remain a cherished recollection connected with the last interview I had with Thomas Vasey.

Believe me, with best wishes for the welfare of yourself and family,

Dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

GEO. LOCKWOOD.

The added notes are furnished by Mr. Tate, another intimate friend of Mr. Vasey, and his associate in his early efforts in the service of the Great Master.

Mr. T. says:—"I think it better to begin with my earliest acquaintance with my old, departed friend, Thomas Vasey. As a young man, who had only attained his majority a short time before myself, he, with several Local Preachers of our acquaintance and myself, formed a sort of friendly circle; and as we met in class together during the period of Mr. Vasey's later residence in Darlington, and also held a weekly meeting for improvement and conversation, &c., our intimacy was strengthened. Mr. Vasey did not occupy the position of a class leader, or hold any other office in the Society, as far as I can remember, except as a Local Preacher, though, in the Quarterly and other meetings for business, &c., he always took a deep interest, and united his efforts with others to advance the common cause of religion in the town and Circuit; and in whatever way his business ability enabled him to act, cheerfully tendered his help and counsel to the utmost.

"It ought to be noted, that from the first there was in the career of Mr. Vasey a strong evidence of his thorough appreciation of the value and importance of the various religious and social arrangements of the Methodist Church; and of this his conduct and labours afforded abundant proof. In his attendance at class, and the week and Sabbath evening services, and at meetings for prayer, he was uniformly regular; and he was a frequent visitor of the sick. It was, however, after the revival of religion which began through the visit of the Rev. R. Aitkin, that the earnestness of Mr. Vasey became more prominent, and it was then abundantly clear that his religious life had been quickened. In proof of this, he was amongst the first to unite in organising plans of usefulness in the Society, both in the town and in several villages, thus establishing meetings for prayer and exhortation; and by this course several friends and young men became associated with him in their efforts to do good, and were led to fulfil the more important duty of Local Preachers. Though Mr. Vasey at this time showed his great earnestness and

kindly feeling in helping forward the interests of others, as stated, yet he did not himself immediately enter upon the work of preaching, notwithstanding there was doubtless an impression deepening in his mind that it was his duty thus to engage, and to which honourable service he ultimately yielded himself.

"In his labours as a Local Preacher, however, it very soon became apparent that he was destined to fill another station in the Church, and to devote himself entirely to the duties of the full ministry; and in this solemn matter he had much more to contend with, in bringing his mind to yield to personal conviction, and to the counsels of his best friends, who knew well the qualifications he possessed for the work. For a considerable time he refused to give way to their earnest solicitations, and at last only deferred to their judgment when his own convictions of duty cleared away the doubts and fears of his mind. His way was thus gradually made plain and open, and he then calmly and cheerfully gave up whatever worldly prospects stood in his way.

"From my early and subsequent acquaintance with Mr. Vasey, I have often reflected with pleasure on the fact that his qualifications as a preacher were mainly to be traced not only to the very early-formed habit of close reading and thinking, but to the very prominent characteristic that he was in all respects a diligent student of the Divine Word. It was his practice sometime before he entered on the work of preaching, to read the 'Septuagint' during the Sabbath morning Lessons. Thus he not only searched the Scriptures, but this reverence for Divine truth was at all times prominent. On one occasion, in company with a mutual friend now in the ministry, the question was asked of Mr. Vasey, as to the best course of study and preparation for preaching. His reply was short but pointed, 'Read your Bible, if you want ideas for your sermons.'

"All this proves that as a preacher the chief element of his strength was derived from the Word, which is Spirit and life, and which 'liveth and abideth for ever.'"

In reference to the time when Mr. Vasey first felt called to preach the Gospel, his eldest sister remarks:—"In the endeavour to quiet his conscience on the subject, he formed a Bible Class of young men, and they soon began to go in companies to the adjacent villages, to hold prayer meetings on the Sunday afternoons. About this time the Society was rent in pieces by the Warrenite agitation. The Rev. Mr. Wolsey was Superintendent at that time. Thomas stood by him nobly. Things came rapidly to a crisis. The number of Local Preachers on the plan became seriously diminished. I well remember Mr. Wolsey came in, and said, 'Now, Mr. Vasey, there can no longer be any doubt about your call to preach, you must come to the help of the Lord against the mighty.' With much fear and trembling, and many prayers for Divine help and direction, he consented. But he saw clearly to what this would lead. He immediately began to write sermons, and devoted all his spare time to the employment. I had the study fire lighted and ready for him when he came home, and as soon as he had taken a cup of tea he would retire there, saying, as he went up-stairs, 'Now, Polly, come beside me on one condition: that you do not speak till you are spoken to.' I used to take my work, and sit like a good child in the corner, sometimes being called upon to assist him in looking out parallel passages and to keep on the fire. Many times our watch was kept till two o'clock in the morning. The sermons written during this time were certainly never surpassed during the course of his Ministry. I distinctly remember most of the subjects. 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' 'The rich man and Lazarus.' 'God's dealings with Moses in the wilderness.' I said, with reference to the last, Nay, do lay that aside; it does seem ridiculous that you, who have hardly been twenty years in existence, should begin to talk of having been forty years in the wilderness! But his mind was far beyond his years. He certainly was set apart for God from his infancy, and had no follies of youth to repent. Heart sins he bewailed."

The Rev. B. Gregory, speaking of Mr. Vasey's first efforts at sermonising, says, he wisely and happily began by taking the utmost possible pains in the preparation of his sermons; every sermon was wrought *ad unquem*. He sought to find out acceptable words. "Hence his early discourses were marked by an admirable precision and clearness. All his ideas stood out in bold definition. His sermon on the translation of Enoch, preached at the first Hull Conference, in a small Independent Chapel, gave a fine example of these high qualities. On one occasion, having congratulated him on the work-manliness of a sermon preached on a special occasion, Mr. Vasey replied, 'Ah! that's one of the sermons I made when I was a Local Preacher. I often take it when I wish to do my very best, and it hardly ever fails me.'"

The wisdom and value of the pains bestowed by Mr. Vasey on his earliest pulpit preparations can hardly be over estimated. His sermons of this period evidence much profound and original thought, and most careful arrangement. In his theological inquiries he did not satisfy himself with what appeared on the surface, nor yet by acquainting himself with the conceptions of other men's minds, though he read diligently the works of the great theological authorities, amongst which were the writings of Howe, Wesley, and Watson, "Luther's Commentary on the Galatians," "Pearson on the Apostles' Creed," &c. His greatest authority (as his friend Mr. Tate testifies) was the Bible. From the Book of books he derived the substratum of his theology. In the treasury of all wisdom and knowledge he searched perseveringly, not only to find out *acceptable words*, but that he might be prepared to *reason "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come."* And through the accompanying illuminations of the Holy Spirit, in him were fulfilled the words of the Lord Jesus: "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." —Matt. xiii. 52.

Few men have brought to the full service of the ministry more rich and varied qualifications, natural and acquired, than Thomas Vasey. He was gifted by nature with a mind of uncommon activity and productiveness, which was, moreover, of great comprehensiveness and logical power, and was further distinguished by vividness of imagination and striking readiness of thought and expression.

His acquirements need not be enumerated here, as the reader will be already acquainted with them. One, however, may be named, which was not the least of his qualifications for usefulness as a preacher, viz., the knowledge of man, of their maxims, tempers, and manners, which he had gained in his business life. But above and beyond all these preparations for the work to which he was devoting himself, was his own experimental knowledge and deep impression of the weighty truths he must proclaim, and his profound conviction of the awful responsibilities of his office. Thus he was fitted not only to address himself to the intellect and understanding, but to the hearts and consciences of his hearers.

Mr. Wesley, in his *Letters on preaching Christ*, endeavours to impress upon ministers their duty to preach the law as well as the gospel, as necessary to the sustenance and increase of spiritual life; thus he writes: "I mean by *preaching the gospel*, preaching the love of God to sinners, preaching the life, death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ, with all the blessings which, in consequence thereof, are freely given to true believers.

"By *preaching the law*, I mean explaining and enforcing the commands of Christ, briefly comprised in the Sermon on the Mount.

"Now, it is certain, preaching the gospel to penitent sinners 'begets faith;' that it 'sustains and increases spiritual life in true believers.'

"Nay, sometimes it 'teaches and guides' them that believe; yea, and 'convinces them that believe not.'

"So far all are agreed. But what is the stated means of feeding and comforting believers? What is the means

as of begetting spiritual life where it is not, so of sustaining and increasing it where it is?

"Here they divide. Some think, preaching the law only; others, preaching the gospel only. I think neither the one nor the other, but duly mixing both, in every place, if not in every sermon.

"I should advise every preacher continually to preach the law; the law grafted upon, tempered by, and animated with the spirit of the gospel. I advise him to declare, explain, and enforce every command of God, but, meantime, to declare in every sermon, and the more explicitly the better, that the first and great command to a Christian is, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ;' that Christ is all in all, our 'wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;' that all life, love, strength, are from Him alone, and all freely given to us through faith. And it will ever be found that the law thus preached both enlightens and strengthens the soul; that it both nourishes and teaches; that it is the guide, 'food, medicine, and stay,' of the believing soul.

"Thus all the Apostles built up believers; witness all the Epistles of St. Paul, James, Peter, and John. And upon this plan all the Methodists first set out."

And thus did Mr. Vasey, throughout the whole course of his ministry. His favourite theme was the Atonement. It was his joy to exhibit Christ "in the glories of His Godhead, the infinite merits of His passion, and the plenitude of His grace and saving power," as the *way* of life to those who believe in Him. But, he did not fail to explain and enforce the commands of the Lord, as the *rule* of life. This he did in a series of discourses on the Sermon on the Mount. And in a sermon on the "Ark and mercy seat," which we transcribe, he very clearly interprets the indispensableness of the law and the gospel together influencing the Christian life. The sermon itself is a specimen of the elaborateness of Mr. Vasey's earliest compositions, and is deeply interesting and suggestive.

EXODUS xxv., 21st and part of 22nd verse.—"And thou shalt put the Mercy-seat above upon the Ark, and in the Ark thou shalt put the

testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee and commune with thee from above the Mercy-seat," &c., &c.

The five books of Moses, commonly called the Pentateuch, constitute a most valuable and interesting portion of the Word of God, particularly those parts of them comprised in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, which treat with great minuteness of the system of Jewish laws given to Israel from God by the ministry of Moses.

It is an interesting employment for the statesman or the legislator to turn his attention to the civil laws given to this people, and in the study of this Divine system of jurisprudence to discover the wisdom and fitness which distinguish every part of it. It is here, and here only, that the relative enormity of crime is distinctly laid down, and the equitable allotment of punishment to each offence, in both these respects due allowance being made for the peculiar government and the imperfect state of society to which they were adapted—the political enactment of the Mosaic Code may be taken as the standard to which the great principles of legislation ought to be brought—and it is worthy of remark that the various changes which the experience of many centuries has effected in the laws of our own country, have all in different degrees tended to bring them more nearly into a conformity with the great principles of political government here laid down. But if the study of this book be for these reasons useful to the legislator, how much so are they to the Christian in respect of the ample and detailed direction they give. For it must be remembered that though those services are spoken of in the New Testament with some degree of disparagement, being described by Jesus Christ as a yoke which neither the Jews, to whom He spoke, nor their fathers were able to bear, and which He had come to abolish as being no longer of any saving use; that these and similar expressions which abound in the writings of St. Paul are only intended to apply to them at that particular time, viz., when the new and perfect dispensation of the Gospel was introduced. They are called "patterns of the heavenly things," "shadows of good things to come," "figures of the true." Now, though a pattern, or shadow, or figure be of no use when men have before them the original, the substance, the reality; yet are they of great value and full of meaning in the absence of the things they are designed to represent. They serve to give an idea of them—to point out their principal qualities, and in an obscure and indistinct manner to reveal them to view. In this sense they were of great value to the people of Israel, and were so accounted by the enlightened and truly pious amongst them. And we are told that the writings of the doctors of the law during the earlier and purer ages of Judaism abound with the most correct and elevated conceptions of the ultimate and spiritual references of many of the ceremonial rites. It was not until the heart of the people waxed gross and they wilfully shut their eyes upon the lights of their dispensation that all these types and figures lost their meaning, and then their observance became an intolerable burden. But in our own enlightened times we have an advantage over the Jewish saints—we have both the type and the antitype—the figure and the prefigured thing before us, and we can compare the two together with every possible facility for discovering the striking

resemblance between both. Such a patient and industrious comparison of the new dispensation with the old in all those parts where the Scriptures warrant us to compare them, will not only lead us to the discovery of new beauties in the Bible, and indeed furnish us with a proof of its Divine authority, which will grow clearer and stronger the more minute that comparison is; but it is indispensably necessary for a correct understanding of various terms and phrases employed by the writers of the New Testament, which derive their force and meaning from their use in the Levitical writings. We may not on this occasion quote the numerous instances of this kind which are to be found in the Evangelists and Apostles, but shall now proceed to the consideration of the passage before us, which is one of them, and by means of which we hope not only to attract you to a more diligent search into this portion of Holy Scripture, but also to convey to you several important weighty lessons for your instruction in righteousness. We shall: I. Explain the meaning of these words in reference to their primary design. II. Enforce the application of them in their further and spiritual meaning. God is here giving instructions to Moses respecting the building of the Tabernacle, He had expressed His desire that a sanctuary should be prepared in which at stated times and at a particular place He might reveal Himself to Israel His people, to make known to them His holy will. And then he proceeded with minuteness to specify the particular fashion or manner after which every part of it was to be constructed. He began with the innermost Sanctuary or Holy of Holies, which was separated by a thick veil from the larger Sanctuary where the priests officiated. It was here that Jehovah designed to vouchsafe a continual emblem or visible sign of His presence, and therefore everything connected with this place was of the most precious and sacred kind. The Ark was to be made of the most precious and imperishable wood; it was to be overlaid within and without with pure gold, and, in order to preserve it from the defilement of human touch, it was to be lifted up by long staves, overlaid with gold, which passed through golden rings on each side of the Ark. The mysterious cherubim were placed upon the Ark, their wings touching each other in the midst, so as to overshadow, and their faces turned downwards towards the Ark, as if looking earnestly into it. But that to which the text first directs our attention, is the Mercy-seat which Moses was commanded to make of pure and solid gold, and place over the Ark for a covering. This was the most sacred and holy part of all the furniture of the Tabernacle; it was the resting place where all the laborious services of the Sanctuary terminated; it was the end to which every other part was subordinate and subservient; for the laver of ablution in the outer court of the Tabernacle; the brazen altar for sacrifice in the body of the Tabernacle; and the golden altar for incense immediately before the innermost vail, were all, as it were, so many steps to the Mercy-seat. These appurtenances of the Sanctuary grew more and more sacred as you drew nearer to the Mercy-seat. The laver was for the priests to wash their feet in before entering the Tabernacle; the brazen altar was for the priests only to offer the sacrifices, though on some occasions criminals might flee to it for protection; the golden altar was still more sacred, none but Aaron, or some of the chief

among the priests who were specially anointed for this purpose, ever offered incense upon it, and it was death to any man who should impiously prepare any incense like that which was used for this purpose. But the Mercy-seat was more sacred still than all these. None but the high priest drew nigh to it. Such honour was only given to him once in the year. He was previously prepared by several days of purification. When he entered within the vail no man was allowed to stand in the Tabernacle, solitary and silent were the courts of the Lord's house during the solemn ceremony. He took with him the most precious incense and the blood of a peculiar sacrifice, and he passed within the vail, and drew near to the Mercy-seat, and sprinkled it with the blood seven times. And he saw God. The visible glory of His presence shone from between the Cherubim, and rested on the Mercy-seat, and Aaron made reconciliation for the people, and Jehovah was propitiated. This was the Mercy-seat. The presence of Jehovah rested here. It never abandoned this covering of the Ark; it occasionally filled the whole of the Tabernacle, and was manifest over the top of the Tabernacle, but here it was constantly and eminently present; and if you read over the whole of these three books you will find that wherever Jehovah promises to meet with His people, and to be inquired of by them, it is on the Mercy-seat. The design of the Mercy-seat to the Jews was to assure them of God's gracious intentions toward them. They had just before been terrified with the thunders and lightnings of Mount Sinai; the remembrance of those terrors never left them, and to this day it works dread and reverence on the minds of modern Jews. It is true that they heard the merciful and gracious name of God announced to them, but they could not bear to hear even that voice; they entreated that God would speak to them no more, but through the mediation of Moses. Now it was to encourage them to trust in His gracious purposes that the Mercy-seat was provided; it was that after these terrible demonstrations of His righteousness had passed away their trembling spirits might still be assured of His unchanged mercy towards them. He had made his righteousness, as it were, to pass before them for a little while. He caused his mercy to rest upon them continually. The revelation of His righteousness amidst such whirlwind and tempest smote them with terror and confusion. If they touched the mountain they died. The revelation of His mercy fell sweetly and softly upon them. Jehovah came down from the burning mount; He shrouded the terrible glories of His name, and, passing within the thick vail of the innermost Sanctuary, He rested in calm and gentle brightness on the Mercy-seat. The people, in the due and reverent observance of the appointed rites, might, through their representative, the high priest, draw near, and find acceptance before Him. Thus, then, we see that in commanding Moses to 'put the Mercy-seat above upon the Ark,' Jehovah signified that the covenant into which He entered with Israel was to have mercy upon them through the shedding of blood.

In proceeding through this verse, however, we find Moses further enjoined to put within the Ark the testimony which God should give him.

This testimony consisted of the two tables of the law containing the ten commandments engraven on stone. This name was given to

it because these commandments witness or testify concerning God. They bear witness to the purity and rectitude of His character, for they describe Him to us such as He is. We naturally infer that He from whom they proceeded must bear the same character as His words do exhibit; and they also testify respecting our duty towards God, continually pointing out to us every particular of our required obedience.

In both these respects these tables form a complete testimony, affording a complete revelation of the character of God, and of our duty towards Him; nothing can be added to them—nothing may be taken from them. But wherefore is this charge respecting the testimony? What had the thundering, cursing law to do within the precincts of the holy sanctuary where sinners fled for mercy? Why was this command so frequently urged upon Moses and enjoined for perpetual observance? and how is it that from these circumstances the Ark of the covenant is so frequently called in Scripture the Ark of the testimony?

Was it not enough that the law had been proclaimed from Sinai until the people quaked with fear? And how then was it that when the people heard of a Mercy-seat, and under the influence of their fears fled to it as to a place of refuge, that even there, under cover of the Mercy-seat, they should meet with the terror-speaking law? The questions are important, let us look for the answers. We gather from these books that the one design of this command was to bring before the people continually their obligation to keep the law. They might have supposed that the doings of Sinai were only the fitful outbreakings of God's fury, which having spent their force would now pass away and be no more. And that they did so is evident, for after they had heard the testimony from Sinai, and had promised to keep it, they made themselves a golden calf, and worshipped, and vowed to return to Egypt, and sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to dance—all this, even at the foot of Sinai. Now, it was plainly necessary to keep the law before them in such a manner that they might be assured that it was always binding. This end was most effectually answered by placing the testimony beneath the Mercy-seat—it declared that Jehovah's righteousness was as dear to Him as His mercy; that in pardoning their sins, He did not destroy the law; that when He most relented towards the sinner, He was still unrelenting in His determination to punish sin. It was through the sprinkling of blood alone that the Mercy-seat might be approached; it was for the sake of the testimony that the blood was there. And because the testimony was as necessary to the Ark as the Mercy-seat itself, it would appear to the Jews that God's covenant with them was not merely that He would pardon their sins, but that they should keep His laws; and as often as the high-priest drew near to the Mercy-seat to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, so often did he acknowledge the authority of the law, and both for himself and all the people, engaged to keep it. And it would further appear from Deut. xxxi. 26, &c., &c., that when Moses placed a copy of the Pentateuch in the Ark, he did it with special reference to their future backsliding from God, that it might be a continual testimony against their sins, and being preserved in the Ark—in the midst of all their

apostacies from God—should still bear witness against them that the requirements of God were unchanged and unchangeable. This we consider to have been the principal design of Jehovah in commanding Moses to put into the Ark the tables of the commandments—they formed, as it were, the condition on which God covenanted with them. And in reading over the multiplied exhortations which Moses addressed to the people, we find that their observance of these commandments is invariably set forth as the condition on which God would grant to them their national mercies. And so these tables of the law are in various passages called the covenant; and as the whole congregation at Sinai promised, both for themselves and their posterity, to keep this condition, we find that God afterwards, by the mouth of His prophets, expostulated with them on this ground, accusing them not of a breach of the law only, but of a breach of the covenant.

And then, lastly, on this part of the subject, we observe that this was the place where God promised to meet His people—" I will commune with thee," &c. This was the place specially set apart by Jehovah for this purpose in preference to all others: other parts of the Tabernacle were holy, but this was most holy. Jehovah did on some occasions commune with the people from the door of the Tabernacle, but His dwelling-place was here on the Mercy-seat above the Ark. They who entered here with acceptance were sure to find Him and to hold converse with Him. Moses frequently entered here, and received from the mouth of Jehovah instruction and counsel. And in the manner of giving this promise there is a manifest allusion to both the preceding particulars; it is again repeated on the Mercy-seat to inspire with confidence the man who passed within the vail. This was his security—that from the seat of mercy God should speak to him. And yet again, there is a manifest including of the law—it is respecting His testimony that Jehovah communes with His creatures. And then,

II. We come to consider the words of the text as they are to be viewed in their spiritual application.

It is true that the things here literally described have long since passed away, but the things which they prefigured still remain. The Ark of the Covenant has been long since destroyed, but that covenant of which it was the symbol abides unshaken and unchanged. There is no longer a Mercy-seat of gold, but there is a Throne of Grace—a dispensation of Gospel mercy established—where Jehovah rests, and invites sinners to draw nigh. The blood of bulls and of goats is no longer shed as a sacrifice for sins, and the smoke of incense no longer ascends from Jewish altars — but the blood of a far richer sacrifice has flowed, and the incense of a purer offering has gone up to heaven. The order of the priesthood of Aaron is broken and abolished, but the High Priest of a nobler order has passed within the vail and sprinkled the blood of His own sacrifice on the Mercy-seat, and offered the incense of His own prayers to the Father of Mercies. And God is still propitious. His covenant of mercy still endures, and it shall endure for ever. It is a covenant of richer mercy and more widely extended grace than that which is here described. For the covenant here spoken of was but with one people:

the high-priest bore in his breast-plate the twelve tribes only into the presence of God; and it was not for all sins that he secured forgiveness; there were some transgressions for which there was no mercy. But the Gospel covenant provides mercy for every transgression—for sins of the deepest and most inveterate stain—and it offers it to all without any exception, for Christ is the High Priest of the world—He made atonement for the sins of all, and as the representative of our universal nature He has gone up to heaven. The Gospel covenant is emphatically a covenant of mercy. But it has a two-fold character, as well as the Jewish covenant—it is a covenant of allegiance. They are mistaken who suppose that Gospel mercy absolves from the obligation to keep the law. The Gospel covenant is as much a covenant of allegiance as that of Sinai, and the facts of the Gospel, as well as its promises, are as much in harmony with the requirements of the two tables as was the exercise of mercy under the old dispensation. What did more clearly show this than the life-ministry of Jesus Christ? Why was it that He tabernacled for thirty-three years amongst men? It was that by His holy example He might honour the law and sanction its requirements by His strict fulfilment of them all. And why was His personal ministry exercised among the Jews? It was that He might expound the law, and enforce its authority on the consciences of men. And surely never were the precepts of the two tables so clearly set forth in all the spirituality and depth of their meaning than in that admirable discourse delivered on the Mount: this was that unfolding of the testimony under the Gospel covenant which answered to the giving of the law on Sinai, and it proved that in the Ark of the Gospel covenant the testimony was still underneath the Mercy-seat. And when we speak of the death of Christ what do we mean? It was to uphold the honour of the law, which our sins had injured, that the Saviour died. It was to show that before Jehovah could dwell on the Mercy-seat the voice of the broken covenant was to be appeased —the blood of the innocent must be shed for the sin of the guilty. Greater satisfaction could not have been given to that law if the world had been destroyed, for God himself was the Lamb for a sacrifice. Go further into the Gospel history: there was the day of Pentecost—the outpouring of the Spirit—the salvation of thousands —all mercy, but there was the testimony in the midst, and Ananias and Sapphira were slain for a breach of the law. Hear St. Paul's description of a penitent sinner: "Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." "For we know the law is spiritual" (Rom. vii.). Hear him again, applying the prophecy of Jeremiah to the Christian dispensation; he says: "Behold," &c. (Heb. viii. 8—12).

Here is the true tenor of the Gospel covenant. It writes the law, not upon tables of stone, but in the fleshly tablets of the heart. It is not satisfied with merely external observances; it demands the inward obedience of a subjugated mind. And the permanence of this part of the Gospel covenant is set forth by St. John in the Revelation, when figuratively describing the development of some future period of the Gospel triumph. He brings before us the vision of the very same things described in the text—Rev. xi. 19. The Apostle ascribed to those who have kept this testimony, 'Blessed are they that do His

commandments,' &c. All these circumstances show us that the testimony is still sheltered beneath the Mercy-seat. And as it was with the Israelitish Tabernacle, that on the Holy of Holies, thus sanctified by the Ark of the covenant, God did more specially meet His people, and commune with them from off the Mercy-seat, so it is under the Gospel with the sanctuary's privilegious worship. It is true that God is no respecter of persons or places; wherever there is a lowly penitent craving for mercy through the blood of Christ, and promising and purposing to keep the law, there is the Mercy-seat, and Jehovah is there ready to bestow the asked-for pardon, and to reveal Himself in mercy to the broken-hearted sinner. But the sanctuary is the place of His rest; there His mercy is proclaimed; there His holy laws are vindicated and enforced, and there eminently and peculiarly is the meeting place between God and the sinner; for there does Jehovah commune with His people from between the cherubim over above the Mercy-seat. And we cannot picture to ourselves a more lively representation of the subject contained in these verses, than that which is afforded by the view of a number of pious people kneeling before the altar of the communion, partaking of the holy sacrament, with the two tables of the law laid out before them.

Having, as we trust, led you to an apprehension of this important truth, that the authority of the commandments, so far from being dissolved or impaired by the Gospels, is rather increased and determined, let us, in conclusion, urge upon you the practical application of this truth. And first we address ourselves to such of you as are seeking salvation, and have a desire to flee from the wrath to come. You are afraid of the punishment which God has threatened against your sins. You cannot bear to think of hell, and eternal torments, and the wrath of God resting on you for ever; and yet you are certain, from a comparison of your state with the declaration of the Bible, that you are exposed to all these terrors. You have listened with gladness to the message of the Gospel mercy which has been sounded in your hearing by the ministers of Christ. They have told you that God has opened a place of refuge, to which sinners may flee and be safe. You have been told how Christ the Saviour has borne the full weight of the punishment denounced by the law against sin, and does, therefore, turn aside its curses from all those who shelter themselves in Him. And this has seemed to you just what you wanted, and you earnestly desired and sought after this shelter from wrath in Him. But you have not found it, and you cannot think what it is that renders all your efforts vain. Let us tell you what the hindrance is. You have not repented of your sins; you have feared; you have trembled; you have done many things: but you have not repented. True repentance is a godly sorrow, arising from a conviction that you have done wrong. There is an acknowledgment that the law of God is right and just, and that you sin in breaking it, have done wrong, and there must be a full purpose on your part to keep the law for the future. This has been wanting in your case. You have fled from the curse of the law as a man flies from the hand of the midnight assassin. He has a keen sense that the murderer has no right to injure him, and whilst he is flying from him, and perhaps crying for mercy at his hands, he still feels that his pursuer is unjustifiable in the attempt he makes upon his life. He is

flying for his life; and if he lost this fear, and, grappling with his enemy, got the mastery over him, he would instantly put him to death. Now it is so with you. The law is pursuing you; it cries for your life; and you are flying from it to escape the death it threatens. But you hate it in your heart; you do not own its sentence just; and what you want is such a shelter from its fury as would enable you to quash the voice of everyone of its requirements. You forget that you are in the situation of a man who has broken the established laws of his country; it is the arm of justice that is raised against you; it is the voice of injured truth that cries for vengeance; it is the rightful authority of the government of God which you have trampled on that dooms you to death.

Whilst you remain in this state of mind we dare not offer you any hope. The salvation of the Gospel is not for you: its rich and plenteous provisions of mercy are not for you; to you Christ is no refuge; for you there is no access to the Mercy-seat. Keep back, we pray you, from the holy place, and presume not, in such a state, to approach the Mercy-seat. Know you not that the tables of the testimony are there? Go back to Sinai! Listen to the thunders of the law! Hear the voice of God declaring that He can only establish His covenant with those who admit the authority of His commandments. And when, like Israel, you are prepared to say—'All that the Lord hath said we will do, and be obedient,' then you may draw near, and, taking with you the blood of the covenant as the propitiation for your past sins, you may approach the Mercy-seat, and you shall find favour and acceptance in the sight of Him who dwelleth between the cherubim.

And now we address ourselves to such of you as are already adopted into the family of God. Learn from this subject the great design which Jehovah has in taking you into communion with Himself. It is to teach you His statutes. You are not taken into the heavenly family merely that you may share the family blessings, and inherit the family privileges, and enjoy the family indulgences; but that you may come under family discipline, and that, submitting to the will of Him who is the Head of the household of faith, and imitating His example, you may acquire the family likeness. We greatly fear that many sincere Christians enter upon a religious life with very mistaken notions: they think they have nothing to do but to be happy, and to feast themselves on the delights of religion, and live in ease and spiritual idleness.

Brethren, what is the design of your communion with God? For what purpose do you draw near to the Throne of Grace? Is it merely to ask for the continuance of His mercy? And are you satisfied when you have realised a certain degree of fervour in your prayers, or have received a sensible communication of mercy, and feel some indistinct and undefined influence from Heaven? If this be the case, it is the cause of all that fluctuation in your religious experience, and those seasons of darkness and deadness of which you so frequently complain. This is not the design of God in communing with you off the Mercy-seat. The subject of God's communications are touching those things that He gives you in commandment. The testimony is on the Ark of His covenant, not as a dead, cancelled, antiquated letter, but a living and binding rule of life. You must make that law

your study; you must pray, with David—"Open Thou mine eyes," &c. And when you see the deep and spiritual requirements you must submit to, then, and as often as you draw near to the Mercy-seat for the pardon of your manifold deviations from the strict line of requirements, you must follow the exhortation of St. Paul, and seek to obtain both "mercy and grace to help you in time of need." We do not mean to accuse you of any flagrant violation of the moral law, but truly we think it not unlikely that many of you feel far below the standard of its spirituality.

Which is the first and great commandment, that which is the sum and substance of the first Table? "Thou shalt love," &c. Is the law written upon your hearts? Do you never entertain improper and unworthy conceptions of the character of God? Are you never guilty of idolatry? Do you never in thought or word indulge in a light and irreverent use of the holy name of God? Is your Sabbath-worship so pure and spiritual as the law requires? And do you continually delight in God as your only happiness, and seek a conformity to His image, as the end of your living? And the second command is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Is this law also written upon your heart? Are you blameless in the discharge of all your relative duties? Do you never hate your brother in your heart, and use opprobrious language towards any who have wronged you? Do you never indulge your imagination in unchaste wanderings? Do you never allow your desires to go out after that which is anothers? Are you never affected with discontent or envy when you see your neighbour prospering more than yourself? And suppose you are blameless in all these points, have you obtained that disposition which is the crowning piece of Gospel morality? Do you love your enemy? Do you forget injuries as well as forgive them? Do you pray for them that hate you, and do good to them that despitefully use you? Brethren, these are the rules of the heavenly family; you have bound yourselves to observe them. This is the covenant that God has made with you in being merciful to your unrighteousness—you have engaged to keep it. It is for this that He has mercy upon you; for this that He gives more grace; for this that He has made you of the number of His chosen people; that he might redeem you from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Mrs. Vasey had cherished a devout wish that one of her sons might catch his father's mantle and be called to the ministry of the Gospel, but in her heart she always meant her younger son, who was quiet and meditative, and had as yet shown no particular aptitude for worldly business. The eldest son, on the contrary, was the temporal stay and hope of the family, and had displayed all the qualities which appeared to guarantee future earthly prosperity. Thus, when her prayer was answered by the call of Thomas to the work of the ministry, her faith was sorely tried. She did not, however, withhold her

greatest treasure, but resigned to God His chosen one, to be henceforth His devoted servant.

In alluding to this great crisis in his life, his younger sister observes, "And now the call to full dedication came. With deep feeling he first mentioned to me that God was calling him to this. 'But,' said he, 'if one of the family oppose, I shall conclude I am mistaken.' This was a fearful responsibility to put upon us. But his 'grand old mother,'—as in later years he used to speak of her, one of the noblest heroines of early Methodism—conferred not with flesh and blood, but said, 'If God calls thee, thou shalt go.'"

And now Mr. Vasey had arrived at a clear and irresistible conviction of his call to the work of the ministry, and having done so, there was no further hesitation. He prepared to respond to it without reservation. He attempted no middle course, nor did he do things, *a moitié de moitié*. It was a free, entire, unconditional surrender, and the extent of the sacrifice consequent on this step, cannot be over estimated. It not merely involved the relinquishing at once and entirely his worldly position, with its means of influence and comfort, and all his bright prospects in the future. It also devolved upon him a burden of anxiety in the interest of those connected with him by nature's ties, which he had to bear in some degree through the whole of his after life. But he had counted the cost, and making arrangements to the utmost of his power and opportunities for the temporal welfare of his mother, sisters, and brother, he consecrated all his rare gifts to the service of the Lord Jesus; and at the age of twenty-five, offered himself as a probationer for the Methodist ministry. He was accepted, and at the ensuing Conference, appointed to the Exeter Circuit.

Thus did Thomas Vasey go forth to a life of self-abnegation in the service of his Divine Master; not counting his life dear unto him, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had "received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

CHAPTER III.

EARLIEST MINISTERIAL EXPERIENCES.

In November 1839 Mr. Vasey arrived at Exeter, and entered on the regular duties of a Wesleyan minister, with the Revs. Joseph Wood and James Cheeseman as his colleagues. In reference to his association with Mr. Wood, his first Superintendent, we quote some portions of Mr. Vasey's own testimony in the biography of that most earnest, useful, and successful minister, by the Rev. H. W. Williams. Mr. Vasey says:—"I shall always account it a special privilege to have spent the first year of my ministerial life under the superintendency of the late Rev. Joseph Wood. His spirit and example, both in public and private life, were well calculated to give a young man the most exalted ideas of the work of a true Methodist preacher. . . . He was a true evangelist. Not content with preaching to the people who came to chapel, he would go, on a week-night before the service began, into some benighted neighbourhood, address the people, invite them to the chapel, sing up the street, and take them in with him. . . . He had peculiar views of Methodist preaching, as distinguished from the prevailing style of other Christian denominations, and thought it should be largely hortatory, with urgent and pointed appeals to the heart and conscience, and a larger margin left in pulpit preparation for enlargement suggested by the influence of the Spirit and the circumstances of the congregation. His own preaching was an exact embodiment of these views. . . . In short, I do not know any man whom I should be more disposed to point out as a model Methodist preacher; and, at any rate, if we had

many such, Methodism would occupy a much higher position than it does. . . . The writing of this brief sketch has been most refreshing to me, by reviving the recollection of one to whom I am so much indebted for good advice and a good example."

And at the Hull Conference in 1869 Mr. Vasey expressed his indebtedness to Mr. Wood, as his first Superintendent, in the following terms:—"It was, in the Providence of God, a very great help to me that I happened to fall under the Superintendency of such a man, who might be contemplated from any point with perfect satisfaction, and who was, as I have always considered, a model Methodist preacher. I believe that Mr. Wood never went into the pulpit without faith that souls would be saved, and he seldom preached without. We were accustomed every Sunday night to draw our net to land and count our fishes. I believe but for his godly example I should have failed altogether through discouragement; but the conversion of souls we were accustomed to witness seemed to be a seal to my ministerial call, and gave me the habit of expecting such visible results at the close of every sermon. Mr. Wood used to say: 'Don't try to make good sermons, but make sermons that will do the most good."

Mr. Wood found a faithful coadjutor in his young colleague. Mr. Vasey commenced the work to which he had devoted his life with unsparing energy of both body and soul. From the first he was a laborious workman in the Lord's vineyard—a "true Evangelist." His direct aim in preaching was to rouse men from their slumber in sin, convince them of their danger, and lead them to the refuge of the Cross. At the outset it was his determination to win souls for Jesus under every sermon. With steadfast foot, unflinching heart, and flaming zeal, he entered upon the conflict with the great usurper; a conflict maintained resolutely and successfully from that hour to the latest day of his life.

That the path upon which he had entered was the one marked out for him in the order of Divine Providence,

the following extracts from his early correspondence will abundantly demonstrate.

He thus writes to his mother from Exeter, Nov. 11th, 1839.

"I hasten, according to my promise, to send you the earliest intelligence of my arrival in this place, and of my present state and prospects. We had a very pleasant journey, and arrived at Exeter on Saturday afternoon at four o'clock. Mr. and Mrs. B. joined us at Bristol, and we spent the evening together. I went straight from the coach to Barley, and found Mrs. and Miss L—— waiting our arrival. Immediately after tea I came down into the city, and called upon Mr. Wood, Mr. Cheeseman, and Mr. Millward. Mr. Cheeseman was not at home. I was much pleased with the other two.

"On the Sunday morning, as you will suppose, I felt a little nervous; went down to the Mint Chapel; the morning was very unfavourable, the rain pouring in torrents, but the chapel was crowded: seats and aisles were full, and a more serious and devout congregation I never saw. In a very few minutes I was quite at home, and preached with liberty from 'Enoch walked with God.' In the afternoon and evening I had to preach anniversary sermons at Alphington, and took up, 'The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness.' The two sermons were preached as I never preached them before; the chapel was crowded in the evening, and the great body of the congregation did not leave until the close of the prayer-meeting at half-past eight o'clock. Several were in distress, and good was done; but further particulars are needless, as I am satisfied that my lot in this circuit is to reap where others have sown. The people are prepared of the Lord; it is the time of their visitation, and everything seems to succeed. The work appears, from what I can learn, to be a steady one: the new converts are firm, and a considerable number of the influential members steadily co-operate with the preachers in plans for the extension of the work. After leaving

Alphington I joined Mr. Wood at the Mint, and assisted at the prayer-meeting, where five or six were set at liberty. I returned home at ten o'clock, quite hearty and well, having preached three times, laboriously assisted in three prayer-meetings, and exhorted several times; and this morning, in dressing, I observed myself considerably improved in appearance. I need not say that I am calmly happy, not without a fear of danger in many points, but fully satisfied that I am in the place which God has designed for me. I am loaded with kind attentions on all sides, and have more to fear from these things than from more painful circumstances, but am determined to counteract their influence by hard labour and weekly fasting. I think I shall leave Barley in a week or two, or I shall be spoilt; for nothing can exceed the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. B——. The air suits well, and the aspect of the country would be like spring, if it were not for the sear leaves of autumn which are strewn around. I think much about you all, and pray much for you, and I doubt not you will do the same for me."

"December 27th, 1839.—Mr. Vasey writes to his sister Jane:—I feel very anxious to hear how you are getting on, and think about you every day; indeed, time seems to increase the vividness of my recollections of you all. And I am sure it does not diminish my affection for you, but otherwise. I am particularly anxious to know how your temporal affairs are prospering; this is the only hold the world has of my attention, and therefore all my worldly wishes and anxieties revolve around your little circle. I am also wishful to hear of your social and domestic condition. May I beg that you will lose no time, after receiving this, in writing to me; and if you confine yourself to family matters, James can write me on the other side on business matters. Let me know, if you please, whether family prayer is regularly maintained, whether you have agreed on your respective duties, and how your health stands affected; also, if mother gets more reconciled to the new state of things.

"These are the chief points that my thoughts fix upon when I think of you, and it will be satisfactory to me to be informed upon them; not, however, to confine yourself to them, but leaving yourself at liberty to introduce any other thing that will be interesting to me. Let James be so good as to inform me what is the daily average of goods sold (distinguishing for cash and credit) since he opened; what is the amount of his present liabilities, including outstanding accounts and running acceptances, and what is the balance of his bank accounts. I hope he is keeping his books well up. I have every confidence that these arrangements are all made under the sanction of Divine Providence, and that, however discouraging some things may appear at first, all will turn out well; this, however, only so far as temporal are subordinated to spiritual blessings.

"For myself I need not say much, as George will put you into possession of everything necessary to enable you to form an idea of my situation, &c. I am increasingly happy and contented in mind; as a proof of which, I am growing fat and fair. I occasionally lose a little sleep through nervous excitement, but endeavour to keep my mind as free as possible from it, though this is difficult. A keen perception of spiritual truths, the value of souls, the guilt and evil of sin, the shortness of time, and the changeless character of the future state penetrates my mind, and so powerfully constrains me, that I am borne along by an almost resistless impetus, to the very utmost efforts I can put forth; and after all, the little I can do seems so very trifling in comparison with the vast extent of good to be accomplished, that I have little cause for satisfaction. I am, however, comforted by the knowledge that under every sermon I preach, some good is done. On Christmas-day I had three very happy times, especially in the morning, from Mary's favourite text—'The Lord whom ye seek,' &c. There are some very remarkable circumstances connected with the work in this neighbourhood, which I will give you in another letter, and meanwhile must close this. I had almost

forgotten to say that at the quarter day, yesterday, we were all invited to stay another year unanimously, and agreed to do so. I felt rather queer at the change from paying to receiving. I have got the cost of the carriage of my books returned, and a regular quarterage of seven guineas, exclusive of board, which is about the same as Darlington. . . ."

To Mr. Tate, his Darlington friend, Mr. Vasey wrote from Exeter: "I continue to feel quite at home, and to labour with all my strength. It is astonishing how soon I have shaken off the world, and fallen in with my new work. On Sunday morning I preached at 'St. Sidwells' with considerable liberty, and again in the evening at the Mint Chapel to a congregation of fifteen hundred people. The power of God supported me in such a wonderful manner that the people were overpowered. Upwards of a thousand stayed the prayer-meeting, and the greater part were melted into tears and sobbed aloud. Several found peace, and more the following evening, when we held a special prayer-meeting for unconverted relatives. I doubt not that very extensive good will yet be done, and am encouraged by feeling in my own heart a growth in grace. I need your prayers that I may be found faithful in this arduous warfare. I can scarcely describe my feelings when I see so many hundreds looking up for the bread of life, and think how very insufficient I am for the work; but my trust is in the strength of God."

At Exeter Mr. Vasey continued to labour heart and soul, preaching and holding revival services, until by the combined effects of over-exertion and the soft climate of Devonshire, his bodily energies became unstrung. He was completely disabled from preaching by a relaxed throat, and obliged to take entire rest. This he did, however, in the full expectation of being able to renew his work in a few months.

We refer to Mr. Vasey's letters for information of his movements and experiences during part of this interval.

To his sisters he writes, May 23rd, 1840:—

"....Your letter came duly to hand, and was, as usual, interesting. I pass over business matters, which will form the principal subject of my letter to James; and as I suppose you will be anxious to hear of my state of health, I hasten to say that I have recovered my usual strength and spirits; and I think I have got rid of the unfavourable symptoms in my throat, which indeed would have been accomplished much sooner had I not taken a severe cold nearly a fortnight ago, which of course settled in the delicate part. I am advised, however, to take rest for a month or two longer, in order to allow the membrane to acquire strength, and have therefore got an old supernumerary to take my work till Conference, intending in the meantime to go down to Salterton, an elegant little bathing-place about fourteen miles from here, and rusticate a little. This attack has not been by any means serious, but tedious and troublesome; the seat of the distress was the mucous membrane, principally confined to the uvula and the nostrils, so that I have had no cough with it, and have not been affected in any other way than being unable to speak. My voice is, however, quite restored, and I am able to preach, but do not intend trying for some time to come as I have got help. I have now been nearly three weeks at Barley, where I have enjoyed the company and conversation of the President and wife, who have left this morning for Cowes, Isle of Wight. Have got much valuable information out of him both in Divinity and Methodist Polity; and am sorry to say that Mr. B. has crammed him with the notion that I am something out of the common way, so that he talked about getting me appointed President's Young Man, &c., which, however, I very firmly declined, stating that my object was not to rise in the Connexion, but to be, if possible, a plain, useful, country parson. (*Not a word of this to be mentioned to anybody.*) I have no doubt, however, that if at any time I should wish it he would interest himself for me. Our increase in members for the whole District is 552, and as many more remain

on trial; of this increase a very honourable proportion belongs to Exeter, which shows also a corresponding improvement in finances. My Book-list was read and approved; though a very meagre affair for six months, it was better than some for the whole year. I am sorry I have nothing to tell you respecting my preaching operations since my last letter; it has been a dreary blank, and the prospect till Conference is very discouraging; but I have chosen my lot, to do or to suffer, and I cannot repent. I am much comforted by the marks of kindness and attention I am continually receiving, so that I feel my absence from home less than I should have expected. I purpose to commence the study of Hebrew, and to improve my leisure time in reading a few standard works. I shall be glad to have mother's promised letter, and as many from all of you as you can find time to write."

And now the greatest trial of Mr. Vasey's life had to be endured. Through a dark and mysterious Providence, Conference found him still incapacitated for preaching, so that retirement for one year was compulsory. But, though these circumstances occasioned him much disappointment, depression, and anxiety, he never wavered in his convictions of duty. The result of his labours having settled in his own mind for ever the certainty of his call to the ministry. We may judge from his letters home that he did not yield to his weakness until absolutely compelled to do so.

To his sisters he writes, from Budleigh Salterton, August 5, 1841. . . . "As you will have received my letter by Mr. Wood, you will be the less anxious at not hearing from me otherwise; and will also know better than I do what is going on in the Conference. Mr. Wood has written me to say that I am put down, 'retired for the present,' which is, I believe, the only course open to them. This trial has come upon me so gradually, that I have been preparing to meet it; and, after repeated trials, am quite satisfied that I could not stand the work of any

circuit, however small. On the 26th ult. I was in Exeter, and preached in the small chapel in the afternoon, thinking to try my voice quietly to the small congregation there, which, there being a popular man at the Mint at the same hour, was likely to be less than usual. However, by some means it got known, and the chapel was nearly full upstairs and downstairs, so that I was obliged to exert myself more than was prudent. In consequence my throat became a good deal relaxed, with some return of the irritation, and I was glad to get down here again, where the air has quite restored me. I am now very well indeed, and as Mr. Wood would, perhaps, tell you, looking like a farmer. You would have smiled the other day to have seen me scrambling down the sides of the huge cliffs here, and perching myself on a projecting pinnacle to recite the poems of Ossian, which I find a good exercise for the voice, and much less prejudicial than speaking, even in a lower tone, in a close chapel. I intend to preach in the elegant little chapel here on Sunday morning, and, perhaps, may try in the evening again. I did manage twice a few Sundays ago without injury. I hope that retirement for a year will prove a great benefit to me, not only in my health, but in mental improvement. I am vigorously applying myself to rub up my critical acquaintance with the languages, and also to read those solid works which require more attention than the urgent engagements of active service would permit. I shall require to know how matters stand in regard to my two spinster sisters; if they wish me to give them away, now is the time. Let this be well considered. I have some thoughts of helping them to set up a Proprietary School in Exeter during this year, which would be a little amusement for me, and a great benefit to the Society; but shall wait for Mr. Barrett's return before engaging actively in it; there is a very good field for such an institution here. I must now close this letter, which (as you must expect all future ones to be) contains nothing interesting; the great subject is gone now, and for the next twelve months my life will be a quiet and

a monotonous course at the best, but 'godliness with contentment is great gain."

Writing to Mr. Tate after the Conference, which had been held in Newcastle, Mr. Vasey says:—"I was much interested and pleased with the account you gave of the Conference services, and would have liked to be with you, but I am the Lord's prisoner, and must remain so during His good pleasure. I am sorry that I cannot report any considerable improvement in my throat, but rather the reverse. In the midst of every comfort and blessing, I ought to be thankful, but yet I find it difficult at all times to keep up my spirits, being so completely shut out from every kind of exertion in speaking, that I cannot even lead a class, or pray in the family. I cannot help thinking that I shall never be well again; but this I must leave."

We are indebted to Mr. Tate for further notes from his own pen, which it may not be out of place to insert here. He says:—"As a preacher, Mr. Vasey gave early indications of superior ability, and his discourse evinced a matured strength of thought, and clearness of Scriptural illustration, expressed in nervous and forcible language, seldom to be found in so young a minister. A sermon, on the 'Rich Man,' which he preached in Exeter, and afterwards at Newcastle, during the interval of his retirement, was pronounced, by competent judges, as remarkable for ability and power; and indeed, it may be fairly questioned if his later ministry produced anything more effective and powerful.

"The last circumstance out of which a correspondence arose between Mr. Vasey and myself, may serve fully to illustrate his character during the closing years of his ministry. An application was made soliciting his help at a chapel anniversary, and the writer had ventured to hope for his compliance, and the pleasure of hearing him once more, which might have been realised had his valuable life been prolonged. The closing words of his letter evince the master-passion of his ministry, 'The only thing I wish to live for is to glorify God, and save a few more souls!'"

Mr. Tate continues: "To those, therefore, who reflect upon the results of Mr. Vasey's ministry, it must be abundantly manifest, that there is a remarkable correspondence between the beginning and close of his labours. He entered upon his work inspired with all the ardour and zeal of one whose aim was singly that of saving souls, and his labours were crowned with success; and though his intermediate ministry was distinguished by faithfulness and fervour, yet it is to the later years of his career that we must specially look for his most prominent successes, and of which his reward is not only on earth, but on high; and these will cause his name ever to be remembered as one of that distinguished band who being wise to save souls, shall 'shine as the brightness of the firmanent and as the stars for ever and ever.'"

The following letter, addressed to his mother, enters more at length into Mr. Vasey's state and prospects at the commencement of the year of his retirement, and manifests the painful exercises of mind to which he was subject at this period:—

"Budleigh Salterton, September 9th, 1840.—The proceedings of Conference would be very interesting to you, and your account of them has been very interesting to me; indeed, partly from Mr. Barrett, and partly from yourselves, I have been well supplied with news from the seat of government; indeed, this has been nearly all that we have had, for Mr. Wood could tell us no more than if he had not been there; for he got all the copies of the *Watchman* from me after his return, in order to see what had been going on in Newcastle while he was there. He is, strictly speaking, a man of one business, and neither reads, hears, nor speaks of anything that has not a direct bearing on the salvation of souls. However, I am sorry that the Conference broke up without any powerful and extensive out-breaking of the work of God, and fear that during the last two or three years there has been a declension of spiritual feeling at the meetings of Conference. The increasing amount of secular business, and especially the important arrange-

ments of pecuniary concerns which have latterly been so complicated and extensive, may in part account for this, though not satisfactorily; and it is to be feared, that the leading preachers especially, are setting an example of long preaching on points of political and ecclesiastical interest, which is too much followed by the subordinates, to the neglect of the plain, pointed and heart-searching preaching of former days; the further we go from the standard of Mr. Wesley's preaching, the more inefficient will be our ministrations. Now, then, as to the state of my health and my prospects. My general health is excellent, appetite voracious, and strength as good as ever in my life. I can take almost any kind and degree of exercise with ease and advantage, and relish any kind of food. But the local symptoms connected with the throat, &c., continue very obstinate; the nature of the disease is slow and stubborn, and there seems to be no effect produced by the elasticity of the system, in the way of throwing off the local affection.

"This is, I confess, contrary to my expectations, and, I think, also to that of my medical men, who gave me to suppose that nature would in time effect a cure, and consequently did not recommend any application but plenty of air and exercise. Perhaps, however, occasional preaching, with a little unavoidable exposure to damp air, may have retarded my recovery. I was allowed to preach in the small chapel here once on a Sunday, and have not, by any means, gone to this extent, but I have always felt a little increase of irritation after these exertions, however short, and have therefore come to the resolution to abstain resolutely from every public duty, and neither to preach, lead a class, nor pray aloud anywhere, in order to give it a fair trial. It is now upwards of three weeks since I preached, and having resisted several calls, hope to have courage and self-denial enough to carry me through. The next two months have always been my thriving time, and therefore will be favourable to the experiment. I cannot but be thankful that I was led to resolve upon retiring for a year, as,

had I attempted the work of the circuit, I must have been, long before this, completely knocked up, and dangerously ill, whilst the circuit would be involved in difficulty. The obstinacy of this disorder and its effects, totally prohibiting all exertion of the voice, give me many serious and painful thoughts, which, as they create much reasoning and exercise of mind, frequently depress my spirits to the lowest degree. Whether I regard my present state or my future prospects, I am quite in the dark, and cannot form the least idea of the direction in which my present path is leading me. Of one thing only I am sure that I am reaping present spiritual advantage from this visitation; I am saved at all times from murmuring. On many special occasions I am filled with thankfulness to God that He should so visit me, and occasionally I can even adore His wisdom and goodness in taking such pains to wean me away from the idols of the heart, and by cutting off all other sources of spiritual happiness, to bring me to rest in Him only as my All-sufficient portion. I ought to be satisfied with this, and to leave events to His disposal, and hope in time to learn this also. There is one circumstance which, though trifling in itself, or which would, at least in former days, have been less accounted of, I regard as being an encouraging indication just now: under my last sermon one person in the congregation was clearly set at liberty, after having been in a state bordering upon despair for five or six months. Nothing since my affliction has ministered so much to my comfort as this token of Divine approbation; it seemed to speak from Heaven,—

"'Be thou a bruised, but not a broken reed.'

God bless you, my dear mother, and spare us both to see each other again."

Towards the end of the year Mr. Vasey left Budleigh Salterton, where he had received many kind attentions, and had derived some benefit to his health. An old member of the Wesleyan Society in this place says, in

reference to this visit: "Mr. Vasey came to Salterton from Exeter for change of air. I suppose he was here nearly twelve months altogether, and returned much improved.

"During that time he preached occasionally, and won the affections of the people. He still lives in the memory of a few friends; but most of those who knew him have gone to rest, and he has met them there to share in their everlasting repose. I have been looking over a letter which I received from him, dated Barley House, 18th Dec., 1840, but it is only of a business nature, and merely shows that his mind was more matured than many young men's of his age, and his anxiety for God's work in this place."

On leaving Budleigh Salterton Mr. Vasey became the guest of his friend Mr. Barrett, of Barley House, near Exeter. Here he remained until the return of Spring permitted his going back to the North. Through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Barrett, he enjoyed every possible alleviation of his trying circumstances, and made considerable progress towards recovery. But, notwithstanding all the outward appliances for his comfort and happiness, he felt most keenly his position. And who can wonder, when he had moved with such strong convictions of duty, and at such great sacrifices, to the service of the ministry; to find himself disabled from the prosecution of the work in which his soul delighted, and in which he had received so many tokens of the Divine approval and blessing; and this in such a form as to make the future very uncertain, must have been sufficiently trying to his faith and patience. But to add to his perplexities, his most valued friends made him at this season overtures of secular advantage: and further, the arrangements made for the welfare of those nearest and dearest to him, when he entered the ministry, were not succeeding according to his expectations. He might at this crisis have appealed to God, and, in the words of Job, have asked, "Show me wherefore Thou contendest with me?" Truly it appeared as though the Lord could

try His servant to the uttermost. But his faith was proof against outward and inward trials, and in silence and submission he waited his Master's pleasure.

We resume Mr. Vasey's correspondence with relatives in the north. Throughout the whole of it he manifested towards them the most affectionate solicitude. He was a truly devoted son and brother, and was ever ready to make sacrifices to promote the comfort and welfare of his brother and sisters. To them his illness, at this period, was a source of deep anxiety.

To his sisters he wrote from Barley House, Exeter, December 7th, 1840.—"I arrived here on the 28th ult., and have now got comfortably settled; my bookcase all arranged ready for use, and every other requisite arrangement complete. You need have no fear of my being comfortable here. I write at present from the room over the drawing-room, of which I have taken possession for a study, and which commands a prospect of the whole city of Exeter, and some miles beyond it; the view is the most pleasant and picturesque of anything I ever saw. The only thing I regret is the opportunity of usefulness, which is now very limited to what it was in Salterton, when I always had some one or other calling for religious advice and Scripture explanation. I am as yet without any light as to my future movements. Mr. B— is acquainted with one of the first men in Scarboro', and would at once write to him on my behalf; but at present it cannot be entertained, and must be left to the further indications of Divine Providence. My greatest comfort under this trying uncertainty, arises from the power I feel to cast both my own cares and those of the family upon the goodness of a merciful and faithful God, and the confidence given to me in prayer that all will in the end be well, both for myself and all of you. And I am greatly helped also by the satisfaction of knowing that during the time of my protracted indisposition, I have been not altogether an unprofitable servant, either as it regards myself or others. Mother misunderstood me when she thought I designed to stay another year in

Exeter. I merely mentioned that I had the opportunity of doing so if I thought proper, in order that she might be pleased to hear that 'her son' was still in request, and lives in the esteem of the people. On this point my mind is made up, and if I take a Circuit at all it will be nearer home, and, if possible, in a dry cold climate. You will be much gratified to hear that Mr. B. brought with him a letter from Mr. Q. to me, very affectionately expressed and enclosing five sovereigns to enable me to buy a few books for my amusement. This is very kind of him, and shows that he entertains a true regard for me, and feels interested in my welfare. At the same time he wishes me to write to him a statement of my intentions as to the future; seeming to think I shall have got a sickening of itinerant preaching. This I shall do either to-day or to-morrow, but from the strain of Mr. B.'s remarks in reference to this subject, I believe it would be very acceptable to them if I would resume my secular pursuits. The frequency of these observations, though it does not at all affect or alter my purpose, yet serves to divide and distract my attention, by keeping before me objects which I would wish to have done with for ever, and in connection with the obstinacy of my disorder adds much to my anxiety. I can only be comfortable by losing sight of the future as much as possible, and striving to make the best use of the present." . . .

Again he writes:—"Exeter, Dec. 26th, 1840. Since the date of my last I have been improving in all respects, so that I am further advanced towards a full recovery than I have ever been. Of this you will be able to judge when I tell you that last Sunday I read the Lessons in the Mint Chapel with a voice nearly equal to the natural tone and strength. I was but imperfectly heard during the first, but in the second was distinctly audible in all parts of the chapel, though in the reading desk below the pulpit. This is an index of my improvement which is very satisfactory, and I did think of trying to preach yesterday, but I thought it more prudent to

wait a little longer. I am able, however, to walk out every day during the severe weather we have had for ten days past, without any inconvenience; and, indeed, I partly attribute my improvement to the clear bracing air, which has so opportunely relieved the mild, moist, foggy weather previously prevailing. These encouraging indications (though I do not place much reliance upon them), together with the kind attentions of Mr. and Mrs. Barrett, serve to cheer my mind under the pressure of many anxieties, both as to myself and you, which naturally oppress me. These little troubles you meet with in business are inseparable from it, especially in such times as the present, and in a young concern. All gloomy meditation upon these difficulties is to be avoided; it is not only useless, but positively injurious, as it cramps your energies when they are most wanted. I shall of course come down as early in the spring as circumstances will permit. I must close this letter with the expression of my best wishes for a happy Christmas to you all. I wish you had more grounds for happiness, but I think we have all enough to thank God for, and take courage. I intend to devote New Year's Day specially to prayer, and think you could not do better than spend a part of it in the same way, that we may as a family be found together in humiliation and supplication before the Throne of Grace. Let us look up if we want light and comfort, and whilst we plan, and labour, and use every prudent precaution, let us ascribe all our help to God, and look to Him for His blessing. Let us never forget that 'prayers and pains' through faith in Jesus Christ can do anything. I particularly pray that mother may be kept from all undue anxiety, and be upborne above these worldly cares, and that all of you may prove that these things work together for good to you." . . .

We close these references to Mr. Vasey's earliest ministerial experiences with a few reminiscences gathered of him in the city of Exeter.

The following notes are gleanings from an old member:

"I can only say that as one generation has passed away since Mr. Vasey's appointment in 1839, my memory does not bring to my mind any particular incidents regarding him, otherwise than these: I remember him to have stood, both in figure and manner, in striking contrast to his two colleagues, the Revs. Joseph Wood and James Cheeseman. The first, full of almost fiery ardour in action, and very impassioned in the delivery of his sermons; the second seemed to labour hard, both in study and in preaching, whilst Mr. Vasey, then a slight young man, was more than ordinarily sedate; looked dignified, composed, and happy in the pulpit. His prayers were devout and comprehensive. His sermons, evidently the result of much thought, were methodical in arrangement and composed with great care, whilst his style of preaching was free and easy, natural and impressive; but I also remember his sermons were generally long, certainly too long, for a well sustained hope that his hearers would be able to carry with them all the good things that he uttered. He most assuredly was very much liked here, and, I believe that all those who knew him entertained the idea, as then expressed in a colloquial way, of his being 'a clever young man.'

"All that I remember, therefore (and this is nearly all), certainly redounds to his credit as a young preacher."

Another testifies: "It was my privilege and pleasure to know Mr. Vasey as an earnest, devoted, young minister. His ministry was always fresh and profitable, and his society at my house was highly valued for its Christian simplicity, earnestness, and intelligence."

In March Mr. Vasey finally left Exeter, and he passed the remainder of the Conference year with his relatives at Sunderland. But during this period of retirement from circuit labours, he did not lose his interest in the work of God, nor did he abstain from all effort in the cause of his Great Master. One of the Sunderland ministers being enfeebled by an attack of typhus fever, Mr. Vasey shared his appointments with him, and thus proved his gradual returning strength of voice.

In referring to his experience during the long months of anxiety resulting from this failure of his health during the first year of preaching, his sister says, "The dark mysterious sorrow that followed my brother's entrance into the ministry, and other trials of his faith in family affairs, tested him to the utmost. But his convictions of duty, and his faith in God's call stood and conquered. No tempting offers of secular advantage quenched the ardour of his love for his chosen work—that work to which he devoted his life, and in which it has been sacrificed. Clear perceptions of doctrinal truth in order and importance—fervent zeal, loving diligence, and tender sympathy, marked the early years of his public ministry; generous self-denial and large charity, after his means, leavened all his personal intercourse, and sometimes induced him to place more confidence than was prudent in professions of religion. An active brain, and highly sensitive temperament, caused him much mental anguish in connection with his various trials; but he never failed to acknowledge the perfect wisdom which laid on by weight and measure in the discipline of life."

During the remainder of Mr. Vasey's year of retirement, he received many other proposals for his future worldly benefit from kindly disposed friends. But his reply in reference to all was, "I shall consider no man my friend who shall attempt to divert my attention from the great business of my life." And after having at length fully tried and proved the faithfulness of His servant, the Lord recalled him to his post of active service, which was never again relinquished until the last messenger summoned him to higher and nobler service in the upper kingdom.

CHAPTER IV.

DURHAM.

In September, 1841, Mr. Vasey resumed the full duties of the ministry, having been appointed by Conference to labour in the Durham Circuit. "With a glad heart and free" he devoted himself again to his chosen and loved employ. Thirty-two years having elapsed since this date, only few facts illustrative of his life in this field of service are extant; but the impressions of the remaining members of society who were privileged to enjoy his ministry are very pleasing, and testify to his faithful, earnest zeal as a minister of Christ, and his desire for the salvation of souls. The Rev. H. Hine, his superintendent, has kindly supplied the subjoined reminiscences.

"My acquaintance with Mr. Vasey commenced after the Conference of 1841, when we were appointed to the Durham Circuit. We laboured together two years, and for about sixteen months he was a member of my family. We have not forgotten how he made himself at home with us, how genial and considerate he was, and how sympathising in time of affliction and bereavement. In subsequent years I often admired his brave endurance of his own affliction, and sometimes had the advantage of his brotherly counsel and kindness. I saw him often in the autumn of 1865. He was cheerful and laborious, notwithstanding much trial of his faith and premonition of his end. He expressed to me his apprehension that in about five years his work would be done.

"No young minister I have known commenced his ministry with such evident tokens of what he would

become. He was then well informed, with a ready utterance and aptness to teach. Some of his first sermons seem to have been amongst his best as to clearness, condensation, and force. It is not often that preachers are equally adapted to a civic and a rural population. Mr. Vasey was alike popular with his most intelligent hearers in the city, and the least cultivated audience in the colliery villages around. I seldom heard him preach, but attended many missionary meetings with him, and could not fail to observe the fitness, variety, and energy of his speeches.

"Mr. Vasey's resumption of his work was signalised by evidence that he had not mistaken his vocation. In the Durham Circuit he largely shared with his colleagues the arduous labours and recompensing joys of an extensive revival. While we had to mourn over much spiritual dearth in the city, numerous conversions of sinners took place in the country. Soon after Mr. Vasey left the circuit it was afflicted with a long and disastrous strike among the colliers. I have a vivid recollection of the blight and hindrances of those evil days, of which mention is made in the memoir of Mr. Vasey's successor, the Rev. J. S. Keywell; but we know not how much better the trials of that time (four months) were borne by the societies, nor how much the evil was lessened by the gracious visitations of the two preceding years.

"I well remember Mr. Vasey's expression of countenance on some Sabbath evenings. Of satisfaction when himself or others had seen sinners submitting themselves unto God, or disappointment when labours in the Lord seemed in vain, and of something more than regret when there was reason to believe that the Spirit of God was grieved, and the good work hindered by apathy and inconsistency in the Church.

"Had Mr. Vasey been constitutionally reserved and cautious, he might have avoided the risk of being sometimes thought pugnacious. If he occasionally seemed to rush in where others feared to tread, it was not, as I

think, in the spirit which Eliab imputed to David. During his residence in Durham he rendered good service to the cause of truth in an encounter with David French, Esq., barrister-at-law, with whom Dr. Cumming once entered the lists. Mr. French came to Durham to lecture on the leading dogmas of Roman Catholicism. The Durham clergy (some of them not unknown to fame in the world of letters) were challenged to defend their Church. I went to the first lecture ("on the Invocation of Saints") with Mr. Vasey, who was prepared, should no other opponent appear, to expose the false teachings of the Romish Church. When the Papal Goliath had concluded his lecture, assuming that these things could not be gainsaid, he tauntingly warned some of the well-paid canons (who were not there) to defend their creed. Mr. Vasey then went on to the platform and soon proved himself in scholarship and argument equal to the occasion, exposing and denouncing the errors of the lecture, evidently to the surprise and chagrin of the lecturer, who so far lost his equanimity and caution as to deny that Roman Catholic priests were forbidden to marry. The Romanists present became so uproarious that the meeting was abruptly terminated; but not before Mr. Vasey had intimated, that as free and full discussion was not allowed, he would attend the lectures, and on subsequent evenings reply in Framwellgate Chapel (which we then rented for City Mission purposes). His masterly replies were heard with great interest and approval by crowded audiences. There was no small stir in the city about the matter, and the Methodist preacher was considered to have successfully met the Romish advocate, and shortened his stay in Durham."

When Mr. Vasey announced his intention to reply to Mr. French elsewhere, the Irishmen present closed round him, shaking their fists in his face, and threatening what should be done to him if he persisted in carrying out this resolution. He remained, notwithstanding, unshaken in his purpose, and at the appointed hour repaired to the place where his lectures were to be delivered, pre-

pared to declare and maintain the truth, notwithstanding all opposition. Here, however, he found to his surprise a *garde de corps* of colliers, who arranged themselves around him determined to act in his defence if necessary. No exigency of this kind arose, but on the contrary, Mr. Vasey secured not only a peaceable, but a deeply interested auditory.

He did not commit himself to this controversy without due deliberation. His replies to Mr. French were embodied in three lectures, on "The Invocation of Saints and Angels" and "Transubstantiation," and indicate most careful and deep research into the dogmas and practices of the Papacy. The Greek fathers were attentively studied, nor was any source of information neglected. But all his proofs and arguments were collated in the light of Holy Scripture, and based on the authority of Divine revelation.

These lectures were premised by the succeeding annotations on the apostacy of the Romish Church, founded on 2 Thess. ii. 3—12.

In this prophecy there is evidently described the origin, secret spread, visible manifestation, extended triumph, and final overthrow of some grand apostacy in the Christian Church. That it is inapplicable to any heathen or Mahometan opposition to the truth is evident, since on the one hand no heathen opposition ever assumed so combined and systematised character as is here represented under the figure of one man, at the head of a body, and representing the concentrated energy of this apostacy. And on the other hand no Mahometan error was ever propagated with signs and lying wonders, and deceivableness of unrighteousness. The false prophet wrought no miracle, nor, indeed, pretended to do so; and his religion once promulgated by the Koran, was thenceforth advocated by no sleight of hand tricks, by no pretended virtue of saints' relics, but by the plain, short, straightforward argument of the sword.

And it also appears that the apostacy was to arise within the pale of the Christian Church, which the Apostle Paul always speaks of [illegible]en he uses the phrase "Temple of God." Unlike other heresies, [illegible]ch, though they originated in the Church, and for a time spread [illegible]ting energy amongst Christian professors, but were soon banished [illegible] cut off by the force of truth and the exercise of discipline, this [illegible] to grow up and establish itself in the very heart of the Church, [illegible] enthrone itself above all worship, claiming and exercising Divine [illegible]rogatives.

And, lastly, that this apostacy was to gain the ascendancy [illegible]ough the prevalence of those evil passions and wilful iniquities

in the Church which should be punished by a judicial blindness, through which they should believe a lie to their destruction. These preliminary observations being made, it follows that there is but one example in the history of all Christianity of such gigantic, organised, ascendant apostacy, and that is afforded by the ecclesiastical system which acknowledges for its head the Pope of Rome.

The correspondence will now be established by a careful comparison of the constitution, claims, and proceedings of the Romish Church.

Its Constitution.—The Romish Church in its revealed and ostensible character, holds the Pope to be the supreme head of the Church, the centre of unity, Christ's vicar upon earth; and they say, define, and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary to salvation, for every human being to be subject to the Pope. (Extravag. C. Unam sanctam de Majoritate et Obedientia.) *Wesley's Works*, vol. x. p. 87. In the most absolute sense, therefore, may the whole body be denominated from the visible, supreme and absolute official headship of his person, 'the man of sin.' There is no single picture by which the whole policy of the Church and the proceedings of its supporters have been characterised, more strikingly developed, than this supremacy of the Roman Pontiff. Other lines of policy and conduct have been altered to suit the various times and emergencies of affairs, but this never. From this wonderful and almost unanimous agreement of men, whose interests were opposite, and who often submitted to the utmost individual injury rather than question the paramount authority of the Pope, it follows that no system of error is so well entitled from its peculiar constitution, to be described collectively in the person of its official head than the Church of Rome.

Its Claims (see verse 4).—The opposition and exaltation here spoken of, have been exemplified by the Romish Church, in the introduction of unauthorised and unscriptural rites into the service of God, the exaltation of our commanded duties above the plain precepts of God's Word, and the rendering idolatrous homage to created beings.

Mark *the Opposition.*—Jesus Christ enjoined but two Sacraments to be perpetually observed in His Church; the Romish Church seven. The Romish Church enforces the observance of saints' days and festivals in honour of these. But St. Paul says, 'Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holiday,' &c. The Bible declares that "the law of the Lord is perfect," Psalm xix. 7; "all Scripture is given, &c., that the man of God may be perfect" (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17). The Council of Trent declares that Scripture and tradition together are the rule of faith, equally to be believed and reverenced, whosoever knowingly contemns them is accursed.

Mark *its undue exaltation of our commanded duties.*—Its penances; its prayers to saints; the pilgrimages to particular places to which are annexed plenary indulgences for sin; its veneration of relics.

Mark *the idolatrous homage paid to created beings and angels.*—To angels, who are worshipped, in opposition to the command of God (Col. ii. 18); to departed saints, who refuse such acts of homage; (Rev. xxii. 8, 9); to the Virgin Mary, of whom Christ speaks in terms

not calculated to inspire such homage. "Woman, what have I to do with thee," and refused to see her when she sought to interrupt Him in His father's business. To the consecrated wafer before which every one is commanded to bow. To the wood of the cross which they kiss, and before which they prostrate themselves, and pray it "to increase grace with the godly, and to blot out the sins of the guilty." But of the idolatrous homage, that which is paid to the Pope is the most glaring. They call him the Lord God, the Lamb of God. They ascribe to him the prerogatives of God. They render to him the prerogatives of God. They render to him the homage due only to God. See description of the Carnival in Rome, in which the Pope appears from the top of a cathedral in a car, surrounded by incense, and is there adored by the assembly. This, in a secondary sense, refers to his interference with the powers and prerogatives of secular princes.

Its proceedings.—Mark especially *the early introduction of its corrupt principles.*—"The mystery of iniquity doth already work." It is remarkable that the Romish writers have always been careful to establish their dogmas by a reference to the first ages of Christianity; they have carefully culled every passage in the Fathers which was by any means likely to favour their discussions; by this means they have only proved the exact accomplishment of this prophecy. Mark the temporary restraint in its manifestation, "he that now letteth will let." That this was the power of the heathen Emperors of Rome would appear from Tertullian. *Apology*, p. 31. "We, Christians, are under a particular necessity of praying for the Emperors, and for the continued state of the Empire; because we know that dreadful power which hangs over the whole world, and the conclusion of the age which threatens the most horrible evils, is retarded by the continuance of the time appointed for the Roman Empire. This is what we would not experience, and while we pray that it may be deferred, we hereby show our good will to the perpetuity of the Roman state."

It was not till the break up of the Western Empire, A.D. 475, that the opportunity was afforded, urging their pretensions to universal supremacy. And in A.D. 606, Boniface III. obtained from the Emperor of the East the title "Un. Bishop"; from this time we may date the revelation of the "man of sin."

Mark *the means of its extension.*—Power, signs, lying wonders, deceivableness of unrighteousness. Quote a few Popish miracles from M'cAfie, 74.

Mark *the occasion of its success.*—The prevalence of unrighteousness, the want of love of the truth, illustrated by the strifes and contentions of that time.

Mark, lastly, *its judicial curse.*—Strong delusion to believe a lie, the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation.

In seeking to be armed effectively as the opponent of the Popish champion in Durham, Mr. Vasey acquired such a clear and thorough insight into the mysteries of Popery, and with it so profound an abhorrence of its monstrous delusions and abominations, that henceforth he was prepared to expose and denounce its corrupt teaching and evil practices; nor did he fail so to do, as

he had opportunity, or, as he considered occasion required in subsequent years.

The writings arising out of the Popish controversy extend over many pages. During the winter of 1842 Mr. Vasey delivered a course of lectures on the following subjects:—1. "Purgatory." 2. "Indulgences." 3. "Papal Infallibility." 4. "Roman Catholic Unity." 5. "Tribunal of the Inquisition." 6. "On Auricular Confession." 7. "Order of the Jesuits." 8. "On Popery *versus* Scripture." 9. "Popery *versus* the Constitution." 10. "On the Popery of the Oxford Tracts." 11. "On Popery *versus* Church Property." 12. "On the Theology of Maynooth College." 13. "On the Present Aspects of Popery and the Duty of Protestants."

Amongst Mr. Vasey's manuscripts we have also lighted upon the outlines of eighteen speeches delivered at missionary meetings in the Durham Circuit during the years 1841 and 1842, each of which deals with a distinct topic of missionary interest and importance. This fact is suggestive of his diligence as a student, and the faithful exercise of his gifts. He might have contented himself with the composition of three or four missionary speeches to serve the round of the meetings in his circuit; but this would not have been acting in accordance with his convictions of the responsibilities and obligations of a Christian minister. In his preparations for pulpit or platform, in town or country, he was alike careful to use all the powers God had given him. And thus, as one deeply impressed with the necessities of a redeemed world, and of his own personal duty, he studied the missionary cause in all its details and exigencies, and warmly espoused, and was ever ready to advocate it according to the best of his abilities. In the notes appended we have his views "On the necessity of Divine influence" to sustain and succour the efforts made for the promotion of this great enterprise.

He says, "Divine influence is needed."

1st. *To impress us with the conviction of the awful case before us.*—The descriptions are often so general, and the numbers so large

—the views so vast and comprehensive, that in the very amplitude of it the mind is lost and bewildered, and sees nothing distinctly. It is the province of the Holy Spirit to shed light upon this gloomy picture, to make these representations appear to our mind's eye clothed with a living reality. He only can remove the scales from our eyes and bid us see. He only can enlarge our scanty thought to take in the wide prospect of a world perishing. And never until He touches our hearts, do they vibrate in tremulous sympathy with these piercing woes.

2nd. *To inspire us with adequate courage and confidence in the holy warfare.*—There is something in these views of the state of the world sadly calculated to chill the ardour and quell the hopes of a benevolent and pious mind. The mind sinks before the gigantic forms of evil. It despairs to overturn such large mountains. It feels its own littleness beside such enthroned and aggrandized iniquity. And in ages less favoured than our own with outpourings of the Holy Spirit, many a godly man has gone to his work, with the feelings of a soldier that leads on a forlorn hope to the deadly breach, despairing to see the victory, and only designing to lay his body down as a stepping-stone to his successor. This feeling has too often paralysed the efforts of the Church, and never will these energies be adequately developed until the gifts of faith are more richly experienced and exercised. Such faith is from God. It can never have its origin elsewhere. It is altogether a godlike spirit which can contemplate this formidable warfare undismayed. It is a superhuman strength by which the arm is nerved for the assault. It is by a far-reaching almost prophetic ken that the soul anticipates a final triumph. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to beget such a faith and courage in human hearts. He opens and explains the prophecies which speak of the glory of the latter days. He applies and seals the promises which tell of mighty aids from heaven. He becomes a Spirit of Intercession in the hearts of the saints,—helping them with unuttered groanings of the soul to pray, and lift a dying world to God. He exhibits the richness of the redeeming grace of Christ, and the extent and amplitude of the covenant of God, and under His cheering inspiration, the hosts of the Lord move on with alacrity, ardour, and confidence to certain victory.

3rd. *To originate and sustain these efforts by which alone this work can be accomplished.*—It is by human agency that this work is to be wrought. It is by a chain of instrumentality, fit and appointed, that this desired end is to be attained. The Word and ordinances must be preached and administered by living and converted men. Such men are only made by the Holy Ghost—inspired by Him with unconquerable love for the souls of these very heathens—filled with faith and zeal, animated by a spirit of severe self-denial, by a noble contempt of danger and of death, and a self-devoting heroism which braves all difficulties. But, in order to the accomplishment of this, more is necessary. These men must be sent out by those who are animated by the same spirit of self-denying zeal, and who are disposed to make equal if not exactly the same sacrifices. The time has come when this spirit of sacrifice must pervade both missionaries and people. The means are totally inadequate—they bear no pro-

portion to the vastness of the object—they afford no substantial proof of the sincerity of our intentions. The Christian Church does not act as though she estimated to their full extent the claims of a lost race. She does not labour as beneath the pressing weight of her full responsibility. Her attitude just now is like that of a man who has ignorantly set in motion a huge machinery, and stands aghast at the movements of its thousand wheels. We have organised and set to work a machinery that is to turn the world upside down—and to keep it going it will require more than we had calculated upon. We have given a part of our superfluous time, and a few of our leisure thoughts, and a portion of our spare money, but all will not do—we must do more. The men of Sectarian views must sacrifice their bigotry and turn their energies from party strife to soul-saving objects. The men of the world must force themselves from the uproar of its politics, and the bustle of its business, and the clamour of its urgent calls—and they must still their minds to quietness, that the wail of sinking souls may strike their ear. The ministers of religion must sacrifice their hours of studious retirement, and think their time well spent which is employed in advocating the cause of human salvation. The votaries of fashion must be ashamed of their costly follies and extravagance, and in the face of such claims dare to be singular in sparing all, that they may give the more. And this sacrifice must come home immediately in some form to the heart of every man that calls Christ Master. But who is sufficient for these things? What power that is not more than human can effect this wonder? Nothing short of the power of the Holy Ghost can do it. Arguments cannot do it,—eloquence cannot do it,—moving representations cannot do it, —nothing earthly can. But He can do it who only doeth wondrous things—who has the hearts of all men in His keeping and turneth them as He pleaseth. He can come down in Pentecostal energy, He can cause His people to part with their earthly possessions and bring the price of them to lay at the feet of those who are sent to this work. And He can touch the hearts of kings and mighty men with a noble enthusiasm in this holy cause, so that the kings of the isles shall bring presents, and the princes offer gifts—yea, and He *will* do it. He has a yearning pity for this lost world—His heart is set in saving it—He has pledged His almighty energies to the task. He would have done it long ago if He had been asked to do it—He will do it still—if there be any truth in the Bible and any faith in the Church. Haste, ye days of power, when the people shall be willing!

4th. *To crown the whole with final victory.*—Here it is, indeed, that His influences are most needed. For after all that human agency could do, it must stop short of the end; it cannot do all. There is a certain limit beyond which man ceases to work and God works alone. We may send out Missionaries; they may go and acquire languages, and labour to convert souls, but without the effectual energies of the Holy Ghost all will be in vain. The work of conversion is tenfold more difficult, humanly speaking, in heathen lands than in our own. These are inveterate prejudices to be overcome; profound ignorance to be instructed; the most filthy debasing habits of wickedness to be broken; and all this to be done in spite of the sanction of antiquity and the scowl of authority. Can all this be done by human might or

human persuasiveness? Was it ever known that a nation changed at the bidding of a few despised strangers? "Not by might nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord." Perhaps we have not looked at this as we should have done. We have been too proud of our collections, and of our band of Missionaries, and of the varied machinery which with so much skill and judgment we have adapted to the end. And we have rested in the fruit of our doings, without relying as we ought upon the superadded aid of God, and our Missionaries complain of this. They send us word that they want this spirit, and they entreat us to pray for its outpourings, as much as to send more Missionaries. They do this, especially from India. We have no where such an efficient establishment as there. We have accomplished Missionaries, able schoolmasters, an extensive and well-adapted system of instruction; in short every advantage of an external kind. But there is wanting this holy rain from heaven. They are thirsting, watching, fainting for it. And as it is in India, so it is in every part of the Mission-field. We can do nothing without the Holy Spirit; the hearts of the heathen will not yield without it; the idols will not fall without it; the spirits of evil that enchain them can only be dispossessed by this overmastering spirit. Oh! for His outpouring manifestation! He will come forth in His mighty workings; He is, emphatically, the spirit of promise, the promised, born of God the Father in solemn covenant with the Eternal Son. He has already come forth in might and majesty. He has moved upon the inert mass of these benighted millions; already they begin to be instinct with the heavings of conscious life; already they grope after God amid the thick darkness that covers them; already they struggle against the powers of evil that enthrall them; already they are crying for help from heaven. While tribes have burst their bonds and won their liberty, while nations are looking for Him who is the desire of all nations to come, even Ethiopia, accursed and enslaved, is stretching out her hands unto God. Tens of thousands of converted heathens have found their way to heaven, and tens of thousands more are on their way thither. And what is this compared with what is to follow? There is a time coming when the world shall wave from end to end with the fruits of a glorious harvest. He who has undertaken the work will never leave it till He has finished it. And if we may venture our own conjecture on such a subject, it is that this glory will come suddenly. When the Church shall have done all her part, and when she shall have ceased from all confidence in her doings, and with admirable faith, shall have claimed and called forth interposition of God's arm. Then in the silence of a heathen's expectation that arm shall be bared for victory. In that day of power the reign of demons shall be broken for ever, the idols be utterly abolished, and the world shall be free. And it is the Holy Spirit that shall be eminently glorified in that last victory. His mighty breathings shall shake the idols from their ancient seats, sweep the powers of evil from their thrones in the air, purge the world from all its abominations, waken up the torpid souls of men to behold and adore a revealed Deity, and turn the hearts of a rebel world to God. How soon this may be we know not, and dare not guess. The times look dark and forbidding, the prospect is cheerless and forlorn, and the evening of the world threatens to close

amid lowering clouds and angry tempests. But this we know that it shall be soon; we know who hath said, "that at evening time it shall be light," and we know, moreover, that our faith, and prayer, and effort are amongst the appointed means of its accomplishment. Let us, therefore, lift up our soul unto God in the heavens, and with uplifted heart and hand let us pray, Almighty Spirit, come!

We have not selected the foregoing notes from amongst Mr. Vasey's numerous speeches, eloquent and soul-stirring though they are, as exhibiting most strikingly his ability as a missionary speaker, but because it appears to us, that his observations on the need of more of the power of the Holy Ghost in missionary operations, also represent the great need of the present day. Since the date of this address, through the might of that blessed Spirit vouchsafed with missionary efforts abroad, tens of thousands more have been won from idolatrous practices to the worship and service of the living God. But it is to be feared that *ad interim*, in our own favoured land, apart from the spread of Popery, which is a direct system of idolatry: amongst Protestants generally its spirit has been gaining ground. Witness the growing attachment to the non-essentials of religion, leading to the substitution and homage of lifeless forms and ceremonies in place of the vital truths of godliness. The worship of the god of this world, its wealth, fashions, and pleasures exercising their fascinating influences on those who profess to be followers of Him who said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself," &c., and thus dividing the hearts in their affections and allegiance, which should be wholly consecrated to His most blessed and happy service. Note, further, the homage paid to the intellect in its scientific discoveries and triumphs, &c., withdrawing the heart from its loyalty to Him, who alone "revealeth the deep and secret things." By these, and many other means, Jehovah is dethroned from His rightful sovereignty in the hearts and lives of men, even whilst agencies are multiplied for the diffusion of Gospel light and truth.

Where can the remedy be found for this deplorable state of things? Mr. Vasey himself gives the answer

in a sermon of more recent date, on the Church waiting for the Pentecost. He remarks:—

Never was it more necessary than in this present age for the Christian Church to feel, and to confess its need of the Holy Spirit. It must be confessed that in proportion as its outward appliances are multiplied and perfected in their adaptation, there is a danger of relying too much upon these apart from the all-informing, animating Spirit.

Christianity has wrought out glorious results both in the world of mind and matter, carrying human nature to a pitch of civilisation, and adorning herself with the highest trophies in art, science, philosophy and literature.

She has embodied her conceptions of the purity and sublimity of worship in many a goodly edifice.

She has provided for the purposes of her great ministry a whole apparatus of learning and culture, and she has applied large pecuniary wealth to the accomplishment of her evangelical mission.

But all these are vain and useless apart from the Holy Ghost; they will not, because they cannot, do the Church's work.

That work is eminently, essentially, characteristically the conversion of souls—the salvation of men. Mere learning will not do this, neither will logic, architecture, music, eloquence, or any other human power. Nothing less than the Almighty power of God can accomplish this result.

We find from Acts i. 12—14, that the principal employment of the disciples when they met together was prayer and supplication, and we cannot doubt that this gift of the Holy Ghost was the great blessing for which they prayed. Now this is the point to which the Christian Church must come before the second Pentecost will dawn. Everything else must be subordinated to this fountain-blessing. Every individual Christian must contribute his quota of prayer; every child that can lisp, must be taught to pray, "Lord send the Holy Ghost." No man is to be considered of any use in the Church, who does not help to bring the Holy Ghost. Ministers must learn that they can only be useful by having both their souls and their sermons steeped in the Holy Ghost. Even aged and sick people who cannot get out to the House of God, must learn that they may contribute largely to the success of the preached word, by invoking the Holy Spirit! Nothing but the absorbed, prayerful and eager waiting for the Holy Ghost can accomplish this task.

Who would not join to plead, "Almighty Spirit, come!"

During Mr. Vasey's residence in Durham, he made no small addition to his mental stores, thus increasing his capabilities for more extensive and varied usefulness in the future. And it must be noted that the fruit of his studies at this period evidence such maturity of thought, and deep and settled convictions of Christian truth, as are seldom observable in the productions of so young

a student. Who can wonder at his facility as an impromptu speaker in after years, when he had accumulated such rich and diversified treasures of knowledge, at the time when he was comparatively free from circuit cares. It cannot be doubted that to this preparation, combined with his own experiences, and his intimate acquaintance with men and things, was due his "positiveness in the statement of his views," and "persistence in defending them," even "against his seniors," which no doubt had to them, and to many, "the appearance of undue self-assertion." His far-seeing, deep-thinking, well-stored, and withal practical mind, enabled him to take in at a glance the situation of affairs, or the bearings of any great question, and he was thus prepared to pronounce confidently and fearlessly his opinions.

That Mr. Vasey, in his pulpit ministrations at this time, did not merely address himself to the intellect of his hearers, and that his efforts were not unowned, the following reminiscence, kindly supplied by a friend, clearly proves.

"In the year 1841, when Mr. Vasey was stationed in the Durham circuit, he visited Wallsend, at the invitation of the late John Reay, Esq., for the purpose of assisting at the missionary anniversary services. The arrangements made were, that Mr. Vasey should preach in the afternoon, and attend the missionary meeting in the evening, in connection with the late Rev. Dr. Beaumont and Mr. William Dawson. During the afternoon service, Mr. Vasey's appeals were so powerful and convincing, that a poor man in the congregation, stricken in conscience, cried out for mercy. Mr. Vasey descended from the pulpit, and himself and others prayed with him until he found peace with God, after which the sermon was resumed."

Towards the close of his two years of labour in the Durham circuit, Mr. Vasey accepted an invitation to the neighbouring circuit of Bishop Auckland. But before setting his face towards his new sphere, he sought a little

relaxation by a visit to the French capital. This he undertook with very limited means, but they were such as he calculated would, with careful use, carry him comfortably through the excursion. He started furnished with the address of an hotel, in which the charges would be suited to the state of his finances. Unfortunately, however, there were in Paris two houses of reception for travellers, each bearing the same title, "Hotel des Etrangers," and great was his consternation and dilemma when his account being presented, after two or three day's sojourn, he found that to discharge it would swallow up the greater part of his resources. He had now to consider ways and means, and he promptly transferred himself to lodgings more compatible with his circumstances. Thus, and by the dint of the most rigid frugality, he contrived to remain in Paris for the rest of his holidays, and to secure a sight of its principal "lions," and returned to England with an empty purse, but with body and soul refreshed and strengthened. We may judge, also, that spiritually, Mr. Vasey derived invigoration and quickening, during this period of relaxation from regular duties, by the following extract taken from a letter addressed to him by his good mother, who, at this early date of his ministry, failed not by her pen to warn or advise, nor to uphold him by her prayers:—

"I have had many fears for you since you left home, lest you should get entangled[1] with the philosophy of the French, and have not ceased to cry mightily to Him who alone is able to keep from falling, and bring us to God. Under these feelings, you may conceive how my mind was affected to hear that you were more than ever alive to that piety which is pure and spotless. I was convinced that God had heard my prayers. Oh! may all that is within me, bless His holy name for ever.

"I will try, by the help of God, to be faithful, and tell you where I think your greatest hindrance lies. I have often been afraid of your substituting mental things for spiritual. God has graciously blest you with a good understanding, which, if properly used under the influ-

ence of the ever blessed Spirit, by faith and prayer, will make your faith, like that of the just, to shine more and more unto the perfect day. You may be called to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Oh! while there is a calm before the storm, put on the whole armour of God, on the right and on the left, that you may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand; get your soul clearly sanctified by the power of the Holy Ghost, and then you will have light to discover the most excellent way. I rejoice in the hope of meeting you in a better world, where we shall, 'free from pain, His glory sing.'"

CHAPTER V.

BISHOP AUCKLAND.

Bishop Auckland is a town situated on the Wear, ten miles south of Durham, and is distinguished by having in its precincts the palace of the Bishop of Durham, with its beautiful park, which is accessible to the town's people. Besides the Episcopalian chapel, it has a Chapel of Ease in its wide market-place, the parish church being about a mile distant. As may be supposed, Church influence is great in the place; and the Dissenting interest proportionately low. But Wesleyan Methodism occupies an increasingly important position in the town.

Previously to Mr. Vasey's being appointed to labour in the Bishop Auckland Circuit, it had only been separated from Barnard Castle five years, and was therefore not an extensive, but rather what was termed by the steward inviting him to the circuit, "a snug one." In the interval, however, the Wesleyans had found it necessary to enlarge their borders, and the old chapel had been substituted by a beautiful, substantial, and commodious edifice. The members of the country part of the Circuit included a large number of persons in one way or another connected with the collieries. To the pitmen his ministrations, both in the pulpit and in their own homes, were, through God's blessing, of great value. He went in and out among them, acquainting himself with their habitudes; interesting himself in the welfare of themselves and their families, and thus winning their affection and confidence. Whilst he, withal, maintained the dignity of his office.

In his pastoral visitations, the younger branches of the households shared largely in his attention and sympathy.

His love of children was intense. Every contact with them he considered important; and both as a duty and a pleasure he sought to instil into their minds at every opportunity some lessons of religion and morality. This he would do whilst caressing them on his knee, or entering into their amusements. And such was his aptitude and tenderness that heart and ear were speedily won, and his sayings were engraven on their memory, the effect of which the "great day" only will disclose. See some reference to this in extracts from a letter written by Mr. Vasey when on a visit to his old Circuit many years after he had left. He first describes his work: "Preached in the morning from the 'seven sealed books,' with considerable enlargement, and to a good congregation. In the afternoon heard Thomas Greener from, 'This man receiveth sinners;' and after service sang up the village towards an open field where the men had been playing at ball, and I preached to a very attentive audience from, 'Prepare to meet thy God.' I enjoyed the service very much. Went up to see old Mr. Muddison, whom I used to visit at the old Geden Colliery, and found his son (a little laughing boy when I was there) a loeal preacher and class-leader. It came on to rain about half an hour before the evening service, notwithstanding which, the chapel was well-filled, and I preached with great comfort and freedom from, 'The hidden manna.' Altogether I had a good day. Was especially gratified to find so many persons entertaining a lively sense of good derived from my ministrations in this neighbourhood sixteen years ago. Indeed there were many things to remind me of my advancing years, for the people that used to sit on my knee as little children brought their children to me to look at. Was glad to find that these remembered many words which I had spoken to them in their childhood."

As the Church's "hope in the future," Mr. Wesley inculcated upon ministers the duty of caring for the training and educating of the children of their congregations. In the "Minutes" of his early conference he

thus enforces the obligation: "What shall we do for the rising generation? Unless we take care of these, the present revival will be *res unius ætatis;* it will last only the age of man. Who will labour herein? Let him that is zealous for God and the souls of men begin now. Preach expressly on education. 'But I have no gift for this.' Gift or no gift, you are to do it; else you are not called to be a Methodist preacher. Do it as you can, till you can do it as you would? Pray earnestly for the gift, and use the means for it."

This was no irksome task to Mr. Vasey. Amid his wealth of talents, not one was more striking than his ability to address children, whether in the Sunday-school or on anniversary occasions. His great soul had the power equally to express itself so as to arouse and fix the attention of the keenest intellect, or the artless, yet inquiring mind, of a little child. By his happy method of illustrating and simplifying the truth, he could convey home to his young hearers the lesson he desired to teach, and elicit intelligent and satisfactory answers. On these occasions he would say the girls were the readiest at reply.

Nor did he neglect to set before parents and the Church generally their duty to endeavour to train children that they might grow up to be useful in their generation. We could quote the texts of several sermons on this subject; but three will suffice.—"Train up a child in the way he should go;" "Am I my brother's keeper;" "And these things which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children," &c. &c. Each of these are able expositions of the duties of Christian people, in reference to the training of children; and many parents and Sunday-school teachers, &c., whilst listening to them were enlightened and instructed with regard to their duty, and encouraged to prosecute it in humble dependence on the aid of the Holy Spirit.

For many years the Wesleyan denomination was content, after the establishment of Sabbath-schools, with

making earnest efforts through this means for the instruction of children in religious truth. But at length the necessity for Christian week-day schools was recognised. And after deliberations extending over some years, and due consideration as to the best methods of education, and of establishing schools, it was resolved to adopt Stow's system, and a sum was voted from the Centenary Fund, chiefly to be expended in the training of teachers at the Glasgow Normal Seminary.

In 1843 a general movement was made throughout the Connexion, and meetings were held for the purpose of explaining the scheme, and raising the necessary means for the prosecution of the project. Mr. Vasey early gave his thoughts to this subject of Christian day-schools, and recognising their expediency, he studied most carefully Stow's system, which is based upon Bible and moral training; and believing that as part and parcel of popular education, it would, if universally applied, under the blessing of God, work glorious results, he gave himself heart and soul to its advocacy. In these convictions he never wavered, but firmly held them to the close of life.

The subjoined notes of one of his first speeches on the subject of day-school education, as explaining his views on the great question, will probably be interesting.

EDUCATIONAL MEETING AT DARLINGTON, 22ND JULY, 1844.

State the case.

Altered condition of the country within the last thirty or forty years—increase of population—stimulus given to trade and manufactures—increase of pauperism from 1838 to 1843—the poor-rates have advanced from five to seven millions, or an increase of £2,000,000 accumulated capital,—and its peculiar action on the labouring classes, isolating large numbers of them from the great body of the community, and removing them into new and unpeopled districts. This is the case in many parts of the kingdom. In South Durham—the collieries have produced it—new villages with a population varying from 1,000 to 5,000 have sprung up.

In the west of Scotland the mines and manufactories of iron have produced the same change to a yet greater extent. In South Glamorganshire and the Forest of Dean and North Wales the same effects have followed.

And in the construction of railways a floating population has been created, and kept in motion from one end of the kingdom to the other.

Evil effects of this state of things.

Loss of beneficial influences of the upper classes of society on the tastes and habits of the lower.

Loss of the restraints of public decency; regard to character; advantages of public institutions connected with science and religion.

Injury to children in the neglect of education, and of the decencies of Sabbath worship.

Particular action of capital in the case of trades and manufactures. Immense accumulation of people in large towns—their association in factories without respect to age or sex—stimulation of mental energies—rapid spread of moral contagion—inadequacy of previous institutions to meet the growth of population—impossibility of parochial or pastoral oversight—substitution of the principle of attraction for that of persuasion—consequent spiritual destitution of the poor in large towns—action of machinery on labour—throwing out of employment men of adult age, and requiring the labour of women and children—families dependent on children instead of their parents—destruction of domestic subordination—sacrifice of comfort in families.

Cupidity of parents. Quote Report, pp. 254-5.

Derbyshire, Lancashire, Scotland, and Wales.

Consequences on children.

Want of affection towards their parents—necessarily leading to insubordination both in the family, in the State, and towards God. "Our Father" conveys no idea to them of God since they know of nothing corresponding to it.

Absence of all that moral culture which is only to be found in a well-ordered family, and for which there seems to have been a merciful provision in the natural state of society by the shelter and seclusion of the domestic circle.

Exposure to contamination. Wolverhampton—Sheffield.

Actual ignorance.

Want of secular knowledge. Quote instances.

Defective character of their alleged attainments.

Defect of religious knowledge.

In Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cumberland, Wolverhampton.

Actual moral state.

In Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Sheffield.

Neglect of public worship.

This closes the picture, and makes it dark enough.

The only true and sufficient remedy is to be found in the provision for elevating the mental and moral condition of the children themselves by a sound and effective education adapted to their circumstances.

General truth that the mind is its own place, and when properly regulated is able to modify the influence of external circumstances, and greatly to control and alter them. Exemplification of this in the miners of Scotland and Alston.

Admitted defects of elementary education, as at present conducted amongst the lower classes. (Quote a few instances.) Mere communication of words and facts loading the memory without exercising the understanding. General dependence placed on Sunday-

schools in Lancashire, but these never intended or qualified to supply education. The present effort is designed to supply this want. It is adapted to do so by various peculiar excellences. Picturing out ideas by words. Engaging the attention of the children by question and ellipsis. Conveying instruction by the master without the use of books. Gallery lessons, by means of which the children not only derive the benefit of what the master knows, but of the knowledge possessed by each other.

This development of the intellect might be thought sufficient for our purpose, and indeed it does what no system of education hitherto applied to the poorer classes has effected: it insures a knowledge of what is taught, and laying this good foundation (which may be extended so as to embrace every kind of science), it provides, by the required exercise of the mental powers, both the ability and tendency to retain and extend it in after years. Doubtless also, to a great extent, the development of intellectual tastes and habits may serve to correct the tendency to gross sensuality, and one which now so unhappily prevails amongst the labouring classes. But by itself it cannot accomplish the whole purpose designed by this educational movement.

The art of reading and a taste for reading is in itself neither a good nor a bad thing, but a power which may be used for good or evil; and intellectual development is only the active exercise of powers, which may be as well hurtful as beneficial to society. In fact many of those persons who have been actively engaged in the recent Chartist movements, are individuals of some reading and information as well as active energy of mind. It was this which suggested to the late Government in 1839 the idea of making political economy a prominent subject in the plan of education they proposed.

But nothing short of a complete moral training founded on the Bible as the revealed will of God, and by the blessing of God wrought into the very frame and texture of the mind, will meet the case. This is necessary in every plan of education as a corrective for these immoral feelings and sentiments, which are always generated in the course of intellectual development. Pride, scorn, and self-conceit in proficient children; and chagrin, envy, and jealousy in more backward youths; undue encouragement to forward dispositions, and a corresponding injury to the timid and the modest, are evils inseparable from a plan of education which stimulates the intellectual without, at the same time, training the moral faculties.

It is our capability of moral character which forms the highest distinction of our nature; it is the right direction of the moral sentiments that has the most to do in the formation of our character and condition in this world; and it is this which determines our destiny in another life. Everything, therefore, in the education of a child should tend towards this point.

But more particularly in the case of such children as we have already described.

The first principles of morals required to be taught them, and their moral training, should occupy the principal part of the time devoted to their education. The discipline and mutual influence of the family circle is the great school for morals; but since, as we have seen, there

is no such thing existing in the case of a large proportion of children it is the more incumbent upon educators to supply it.

This is the peculiar excellency of the system now proposed to be extended.

It supplies the desideratum of a family education in the highest degree of perfection.

Union of the playground and gallery.

Approbation of the Master the highest reward—generally distributed, always valued. Quote the mode of detecting and deterring from vice by the sympathy of numbers; its amazing and irresistible power; its peculiar adaptation to crowded populations.

The pattern set by Moses.

The hopefulness of this remedy; its success as far as it has been tried.

Archimedes.

Its use in the hands of the Methodist body.

Their position favourable; their past history in keeping; they have always been the benefactors of the poor; their present agency suitable; religious persons; without love of lucre; animated by the love of God.

Their influence over the community to be benefited better than compulsory enactments.

Their future position greatly depends on the movement. Other persons may help.

During Mr. Vasey's residence at Bishop Auckland, he visited his father's grave at Colne, and kneeling upon it, pleaded earnestly for a double portion of his spirit. Specially did he covet his zeal and success in winning souls for Christ. Who can doubt that that prayer was answered in the absorbing passion for souls which characterised Mr. Vasey's ministerial career, and which, becoming more powerful from year to year, consumed him by its intensity!

At the Conference of 1844, his term of ministerial probation ended. We transcribe with pleasure an extract from "The Memorial Sketch" of Mr. Vasey, by Rev. B. Gregory, which, besides other interesting memories, contains a most graphic description of the Ordination Service.

"The first time the writer met Mr. Vasey was at the Birmingham Conference of 1844, when both were ordained. The writer had been familiar in boyhood with the fame of Tom Vasey's academic exploits. At a great public school, characters of mark become legend-

ary and pre-historic in the course of two or three years after they have left. The traditional history of a school being wholly oral, its heroic ages are separated from the present by about half the usual term of school life. In the writer's Grove days, 'Tom Vasey' was already a myth. His sayings and doings had the bardic charm of a chivalrous antiquity. He was one of the giants of the olden time. It was therefore with keen interest that the writer scrutinised the veritable 'Tom Vasey,' as now a brother minister. Besides, our fathers had been friends and fellow-labourers before either of us was born. It is to be confessed our first impression was not favourable. Mr. Vasey was then thirty years of age, and being bald and rather inclined to rotundity, looked full five years older. Whilst perfectly gentlemanly, his bearing in society, and his tone in conversation showed nothing of the diffident neophyte. He had evidently been the oracle in the circles in which he had moved. There was a positiveness in the statement of his views, and a persistence in defending them against the larger experience and fuller information of his seniors, which had the appearance of undue self-assertion. But a little closer acquaintance proved that all this was mere mannerism. It all resulted from his high toned health, his exuberance of animal spirits, his simplicity and transparency, his generous confidence in his brethren, his hilarious delight in their society, his frank consciousness of power, and instinctive pleasure in its exercise. But his statement of experience at the public examination of the candidates for ordination was strikingly and beautifully characteristic. Cherry-street chapel was crowded to excess. Dr. Bunting, as the President, conducted the examination, and Dr. Newton, the secretary, sat on his left hand. The two chieftains of the people, surrounded by the magnates of Methodism, all of them famous in the congregation as men of renown, formed an imposing spectacle. Fifty-five candidates occupied the front of the gallery, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

Time would fail to tell of the deliverances of J. Bowman, W. Davison, G. C. Harvard, John Kirk, J. H. Lord, G. T. Perks, &c., but three speeches had made an immense impression on the audience. Brother George Dickinson's picturesque and dramatic account of his conversion had lifted the people in the central downstairs pews bodily off their seats, and made their eyes radiant through their tears, and put the good vicar of Yardley (Mr. Gwyther), almost past his propriety by its contagious enthusiasm. Brother M'Aulay had broken us all down by his description of his conversion, by means of the fly-word at the bottom of a page of an old tract. One of the Welsh brethren had made Dr. Newton hold his sides with the startling energy with which he closed his speech, by announcing his determination to convert *damnable* sinners to the faith of Christ! It was now very late; the atmosphere had been wrought to a high degree of tension. By virtue of the lateness of the letter V in the alphabet, Mr. Vasey was the last speaker, excepting Mr. Wiseman. But Mr. Vasey spoke as if at a village love-feast, or taking sweet counsel with some bosom friend. He dwelt principally, and with minute detail, on his efforts to translate into his own experience the Methodist doctrine of entire sanctification. When he sat down, Dr. Bunting thanked him warmly before the congregation for the instruction and encouragement which he had personally derived from his clear and simple statements."

He was reappointed to the Bishop Auckland Circuit, and returned to it, consecrated afresh in all his "soul and body's powers" to the service of his blessed Master. The succeeding letter, from one who was long and intimately associated with him as a friend, and in works of usefulness, testifies to his diligence and zeal as a Christian pastor. He was "instant in season and out of season," not limiting his labours within the bounds of ordinary pulpit and circuit duties, but going "into the highways," to warn men "to flee from the wrath to come," and when he deemed it expedient, anticipating or

supplementing his spiritual warnings and counsels, with advice in reference to their social interests.

Benton Lodge, Darlington, June 27th, 1873.

MY DEAR MRS. VASEY,

I HAVE been very anxious to find some old papers and letters which would have thrown light upon some points of my dear departed friend's character. Unfortunately, I cannot find them, and conclude they must have been destoyed. I will, however, try to jot down a few things that may be of interest to you as *facts* coming under my own observation.

When Mr. Vasey came into the Bishop Auckland Circuit, after the Conference of 1843, one thing particularly made a lasting impression on my mind, viz., his entire abandonment to his work *as a minister*. In order that he might do the work of a pastor efficiently he had the names of all the members in the Circuit arranged in regular order as to their residences; the lists being made out by each society steward. And by this mode I am safe in saying that Mr. Vasey made a personal visit to *every member of Society in that Circuit*.

These visits made him acquainted with the peculiar spiritual necessities of each particular family, and led him to take an interest in the children and young people of these families, which is remembered with great gratitude by many at the present time; and when bereavement, or any other great calamity came upon a family, his tact and skill joined with his kindness of heart, enabled him to advise and arrange for them in a way which relieved and encouraged the perplexed and distressed, and for ever endeared the minister in their homes. On this point I can speak from experience. My father died in February, 1843, leaving me, at the age of twenty-two, with five sisters and one brother, all excepting two sisters younger than myself. Coming, as Mr. Vasey did the following Conference, I found in him a counseller and guide as well as a comforter, and every member of my family cherishes his memory with the greatest affection.

The sytematic manner in which he caused the *Missionary collecting and the reading of Missionary notices* to be attended to, was such as I have never seen equalled.

The Sunday-schools received his constant and careful attention. He visited them not as a critic, but as a kind and careful helper to those who were doing their best to become good Sunday-school teachers. His addresses to the children were models of lessons, and contributed much towards forming a good band of Sunday-school teachers in that Circuit, the useful effect of which has continued to be seen at the present time.

Mr. Vasey's effective exertions in behalf of the general education of the country, is too large a subject for me to speak upon; they are known to all the Methodist world. But the interest he took in the establishment of Libraries, Literary Institutes, Mechanics' Institutes, &c., in the pit villages, at a time when employers of labour were frequently indifferent and careless about the education of their workmen, and in many cases actually *opposed* to it, speaks volumes for the large-

ness of Mr. Vasey' views on this subject. Only those who were working with him and caught his spirit, and entered into his views *at that time*, can fully appreciate this part of his labours. The subject is now better understood by the whole nation, but those who have recently espoused this cause, cannot fully appreciate the value of work bestowed upon the education of pitmen thirty years ago.

In the year 1844 there was a long and distressing "strike" of the pitmen in Durham and Northumberland. The effect of this was greatly felt in the Bishop Auckland Circuits. This can be understood when it is remembered that the whole of the pitmen in that Circuit were out of work during twenty weeks. The strike commenced in March and ended the latter part of August. The benefit of Mr. Vasey's labours among the pitmen at this juncture will never be fully understood in this world. I have known him preach four times on his journey between Bishop Auckland and Toforhill, a distance of three miles. As he walked along the road, he would find a group of men talking over their troubles, scarcely knowing how to spend their time in their idleness. Mr. Vasey would speak to them on the subject which was engrossing their attention so deeply. From that he would pass into the deeper subject of their *souls'* necessities, and would suggest their singing a hymn which he gave out, then he prayed with them as they stood or kneeled around, and finished by preaching Christ to them. This he did with so much tact that the men invariably listened to him with great attention. In all his journeys in the Circuit during that long and dreary twenty weeks, he continued the labours I have described. One particular date I can refer to, as I find an entry in my diary as follows:—"Wednesday May 8th, 1844. I was in the office to-day until half-past three o'clock, when I went down to the Railway-bridge and heard Mr. Vasey preach to a number of pitmen out of doors. The weather was fine. Mr. Vasey preached three times on his way up here before this service and again at chapel in the evening at half-past seven o'clock. The pitmen are still on strike, this is the fifth week." This is a specimen of the labour Mr. Vasey bestowed in the *spiritual* interests of these men in the agony of their struggle for what they believed to be "their rights."

He did not, however, confine himself to their direct spiritual interests, but went into the social aspect of their struggle, getting reliable information from both master and workmen. He and I together wrote hand-bills for circulation among the men; each of us pointing out any peculiarities on either side as they arose in the conflict. I enclose you the only specimens I can find of this kind of work in which he engaged. You will see one is in his hand writing, and one in my own. I afterwards had an opportunity of knowing that these productions were of great use in bringing about a better feeling between the two contending parties.

The large bundle of copies of those hand-bills, which were printed and circulated during this time (which I had filed and put carefully away), would, I have no doubt, been deeply interesting to you; but I cannot find them, although I have spent a great deal of time in searching for them, and have, in consequence, I fear, wearied your patience with the delay in sending this sketch, a delay brought about

by this and other unavoidable causes, which I greatly regret, but which I feel it is needless fully to explain.

Indeed, I have been afraid to undertake saying anything about a character for which I have such a deep reverence and an admiration so profound. Knowing him as I have done in the world as a man of business, in the Church as a minister of Christ, in the school as an educator, in the families of Christian people as a visitor and pastor, in his own home as a husband and father, and, in addition to all, endeared as he was to myself as a true unwavering *friend*, whose memory I shall ever cherish beyond anything that words can describe; I am sure you will understand me when I say that I have felt it difficult to commence describing a *man*, so real, sincere, and simply grand and *noble*.

His whole every-day life appears now that I look back upon it like one holy happy service, begun, continued, and ended in Christ. How entire that consecration and how glorious that end, none knows so well as yourself.

You can, I know, sympathise with me in feeling the poverty of *words;* at the same time you will revel in the knowledge which the *heart* alone can communicate in contemplating a character such as that of Thomas Vasey.

Praying that you may have strength given you to finish the work upon which your heart is so worthily set,

Believe me, my dear Mrs. Vasey,

Yours affectionately,

Harrogate. THOMAS GREENER.

The specimen of hand-bill kindly forwarded by Mr. Greener is throughout a stirring appeal to the colliers, and no doubt would interest readers, but want of space forbids its insertion.

Another friend, also a local preacher, writes:—"The Church universally mourns the loss of so faithful a minister. When Mr. Vasey came to Bishop Auckland, I was living at Shildon. I well remember his invitation to the circuit. His appointment was heartily welcomed in connection with that of the late Rev. Ambrose Freeman, at the Conference of 1843. Mr. Vasey's ministry was both effective and attractive. Subsequently I removed to Bishop Auckland, where I formed a closer intimacy with him, and a friendly feeling was kindled, which I believe ever remained. There was evidently running through his whole ministry deep sympathy with his flock. He was to myself a ministering angel, when suddenly bereft of the wife of my youth, and left alone with two mother-

less children. His visits to my home after this became more frequent. In one of those visits I remember drawing him out in conversation on the subject of the sacrifice he had made in giving up his worldly position and prospects for the purpose of preaching the Gospel. The manner in which he replied made an impression upon me, which has never been erased. He gave me to understand that he had given up all worldly gain, and counted all but dung and dross, so that he might win souls to Christ. He was ever ready to assist in carrying out any project which was calculated to help on the ark of God. He formed bands of prayer leaders. Through his influence a beautiful organ was introduced into the Bishop Auckland chapel, at a cost of £400; and seeing the desirability of erecting a Wesleyan day-school, he secured a promise of £1,000 from the late Henry Dowson, Esq. He then paid visits to the leading friends in the circuit, and succeeded in obtaining further promises of subscriptions towards its erection and maintenance. A few years afterwards, he attended the laying of the foundation stone, and took a leading part in its services. A large concourse of people assembled, with about one thousand children. This was quite a red-letter-day for Bishop Auckland Methodists. This institution has even surpassed the most sanguine expectations of its promoters.

"As to the fruit of Mr. Vasey's ministry in the circuit, it is difficult to estimate its benefits. During that period an unfortunate 'strike' sprung up between the coalowners and the employed. For the space of twenty weeks, thousands of the pitmen ceased working. At the time feeling ran high, the public mind became inflamed, and hundreds suffered spiritually. To use a common phrase, it was difficult to keep the cart upon its wheels. In order to save many from making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, Mr. Vasey frequently preached to the multitudes in villages, under the canopy of heaven; and I doubt not he was the instrument of saving many of our members from casting away their confidence. It

was hard work making inroad in the world outside, as the Ishmaelites lifted up their hand against any attempt to bring them to Christ. Nothing would occupy their thoughts but the tyranny of their employers, as they supposed. Had Mr. Vasey's labours been bestowed under more favourable circumstances, I doubt not the result would have been more visible good. I had the pleasure of his company about twelve or eighteen months before his death, and in a conversation on that occasion, he said, 'I regard my time spent at Bishop Auckland as almost to no purpose.' Such counteracting influences as these named, contributed to give him this impression. Yet it is hardly fair to come to such a conclusion. We are too apt merely to calculate good accomplished, and forget to take into account the evil prevented. Under such circumstances, very often great good is accomplished by the prevention of evil: I have no doubt it was especially so during Mr. Vasey's stay at Bishop Auckland. I have reason to know his labours were not in vain in the circuit. 'He rests from his labours, and his works follow him.' We want more Thomas Vasey's. I always admired him for his unflinching integrity. He never seemed to court any man's favour, and certainly feared no man's frown in the discharge of his duty."

The manner in which Mr. Vasey expressed himself to his friend in reference to the effect of his ministry in Bishop Auckland, was according to his habit of speaking of his own services, and thus in all sincerity it may be asserted with confidence that he never was known to magnify his achievements as a minister, but on the contrary, was accustomed to speak depreciatingly of, or to keep out of sight altogether his own deeds, whilst he would make prominent or amplify those of his brethren. Richard Baxter says: "I never knew a minister much owned of God, unless he had a desire bordering upon unhappiness to see the fruit of his labours." This was certainly the case with Mr. Vasey. His longing to see souls saved was so intense, that if he did not witness

good done under his ministry, his depression was extreme; but if he saw sinners brought to Christ, and believers built up in their most holy faith, his joy and gratitude overflowed. The writer has often felt assured that had his hearers generally been aware of his sufferings through discouragement, he would have received more frequent and direct testimonies to his usefulness.

He had many seasons of depression whilst labouring at Bishop Auckland, and a very alarming attack in March, 1845, which took the form of apoplexy, was probably, in a great measure, due to the pressure of his anxieties in connection with his ministerial responsibilities.

On the return of Conference, Mr. Vasey felt some solicitude about his next sphere of service, and earnestly sought Providential guidance in the matter. He was first named in the stations for Whitby. On many accounts this appointment seemed desirable, and both the Whitby stewards and himself signified their satisfaction to the Conference authorities. To his surprise, however, he was removed to City-road, the first London Circuit.

In allusion to the change in his prospects, he wrote to his future wife :—"But now here is a letter this morning announcing that I am appointed to City-road, along with John Lomas, Henry Fish, George Steward, and J. C. Pengelley. Here is a pretty business, for me to preach beside the first men in the Connexion. I tremble at the thought. I do not think it would be prudent to attempt any alteration in the appointment, and I have little doubt that it will stand if I do not object. It is of great importance that we should be rightly directed, and I trust you will join me in fervent prayer to the Father of mercies for His guidance and blessing."

Again he writes :—"Look at the circuit to which I am in all probability going. My predecessor* is a young man of first-rate ability, with whom I am conscious I could not bear a comparison. My colleagues are picked men, as much as we could find in any circuit in the entire

* Rev. W. Arthur.

Connexion; the circuit accustomed to the very best preaching. What can I do in such a situation but strain myself to the utmost, and I know, too well, that when I have done my best, I shall be in danger of sinking into despondency under a sense of my incompetency." These extracts further disclose his humble ideas of his own performances, and the high opinion he entertained of the talents of his ministerial brethren named. With all his self-consciousness of power, and his independence of thought, manner, expression, and action, he was truly low in his own eyes in reference to his own doings.

On Tuesday, August 26th, Mr. Vasey was united in marriage to Mary Jane, the second daughter of Mr. Ebenezer Monkhouse, carpet manufacturer, Bishop Auckland (originally of Barnard Castle). On the eve of their wedding-day, Mr. Vasey, in a conversation with his intended wife, expressed to her his strong impression that he would die a martyr in the Lord's cause, and asked if she was prepared to suffer with him. This belief took no decided form in his mind, but he thought he might be called to die in the mission-field. The conversation deeply affected her who was his future companion in life. He never again alluded to the subject, but she often reverted to it in her mind, whilst witnessing his anguish, mental and physical, in his ministerial life. Mr. Vasey had in him the spirit of a martyr, and that spirit was in daily exercise from the commencement of his Christian course to its close; in his crucifixion of self, and in his self-sacrificing and ardent zeal,—in his intense yearning for souls, and in his deep depression arising through his habitual depreciation of his own labours and their results,—in his uncompromising hostility to everything likely to prove obstructive to the progress of his Master's cause, and in his unflinching adherence to his own high standard of Christian principles,—in his sufferings through treatment resulting from a misapprehension and a deficient appre-

ciation of his character, and in his severe trials through family afflictions—in his noble struggles with pain and weakness, and in his adhesion to his work when manifestly needing rest—and finally, in his last agony. He could truly have declared, "I die daily," in the cause which absorbed his heart's best affections, and in which every energy of soul and body were freely and entirely expended.

CHAPTER VI.

FIRST AND EIGHTH LONDON CIRCUITS—CITY ROAD AND ISLINGTON.

As may have been noted in the preceding chapter, Mr. Vasey's elevation to the first circuit in the Connexion was entirely undesired, unsought, and unexpected.

His Conference appointment included the office of Secretary to the Wesleyan Education Committee. Thus, he was introduced to a new sphere of duty. And though, as he had expressed himself in a letter from his first circuit, his "object was not to rise in the Connexion, but to be a plain useful country parson," he never hesitated to accept the position assigned him.

From the earliest to the latest stage of Mr. Vasey's ministerial course, his own wishes were subordinated to the welfare of the Lord's cause in the Wesleyan Connexion. On commencing his Christian career, he had laid himself, with all his powers of body and soul, at the feet of his Divine Master, to be used as He should appoint; saying, in effect, "Lord Jesus, if Thou wilt receive me into Thine house, if Thou wilt but own me as Thy servant, I will not stand upon terms; impose upon me what conditions Thou pleasest, write down Thine own articles, command me what thou wilt, put me to any thing Thou seest good; let me come under Thy roof, let me be Thy servant, and spare not to command me, I will be no longer mine own, but give up myself to Thy will in all things."

And what this unconditional surrender had cost him, and probably might do in the future, did not weigh with him; he held firmly to his engagement, as his path step

by step opened before him, even to the end of his earthly course.

Mr. Vasey had been led to place himself at the service of the Methodist body, not only on account of early associations and predilections; but also, because he believed that in connection with that community of Christians he should find the most opportunities for usefulness. So, in contemplating removals, his supreme anxiety was, that he might be guided by Divine Providence to a sphere in which he would be able to exercise his gifts to the greatest advantage in the cause of the Redeemer.

As a Wesleyan minister, he ever recognised, under God, the authority of the Wesleyan Conference. His invitations to circuits were accepted subject to the approval and decision of that assembly, and he was never known to urge personal feelings, or family convenience, in reference to Conference appointments. Hence, now, though he would infinitely have preferred remaining in a quiet circuit, in which he could have continued free to do the more direct work of an evangelist, yet, as one to whom had been committed many talents, and who truly desired to occupy until his Lord should come, he held himself in readiness for any service imposed upon him, which might bear, though more remotely, on the interests of the work of God.

The reader has already been made aware of Mr. Vasey's serious views of Christian responsibility in reference to national education. He cannot therefore be surprised that he should undertake the official duties of one of the Wesleyan Education Secretaries, in accordance with Conference arrangements.

He was designated to City Road, as a young minister, and was therefore not entitled to a house. The circuit had, however, engaged to maintain a fifth unmarried minister after the ensuing Conference. Meantime Mr. Vasey must provide a home for himself and his bride. His first business, consequently, was to secure apartments at a convenient distance from Wilderness-row Chapel, the society of which was to be his special

charge. This done, he entered upon his varied duties, with the firm resolve that those directly relating to the interests of his circuit should be paramount.

He became located in proximity to the house of one of the Society stewards* (a devoted servant of God, and of Methodism,) and within easy reach of most of the members connected with the Wilderness-row Chapel, among whom he found many genial friends and co-workers.

The first Sabbath in the circuit was a day of deep anxiety. The importance of his position, and his imagined incompetency for it, oppressed his spirits. He could truly be said to have commenced his labours in his new sphere in fear and trembling. His appointments for the day were at Hoxton, and Wilderness-row; and his selected subjects "Enoch's walk," and "God is love." But even in discoursing on these favourite and glorious themes, he did not fully rise above the burden which weighed down his spirits.

The same feelings possessed him in an intensified degree when he stood for the first time in the pulpit of City-road Chapel, and thought of the distinguished men who had delivered God's messages with so much power and unction in that hallowed place. But gradually his spirit rose to a happier and more exalted frame. He was consciously inspired with the same zeal, and baptized with the same spirit, which had given life and success to his departed predecessors, and he felt that "strong in the strength which God supplies," and in the faithful use of his talents he had nothing to fear; and with a heart overflowing with desire for the welfare of the souls of his congregation, he put his text in the stirring and solemn interrogative, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost?"

Ever afterwards Mr. Vasey felt it both a privilege and happiness to preach in City-road Chapel, and many were the blessed seasons with which he was favoured in that and other places of worship in the circuit, during his three

* The late Mr. William Bourne.

years sojourn in it. But again and again in after years did he refer to his mental suffering when he made his *début* in the pulpits of London first. Little did his hearers imagine that under so calm, dignified, and independent an exterior, there struggled such emotions.

The succeeding reminiscence of his first appearance at the minister's meeting, in the book-room, City-road, contributed by a brother minister who was present, is strikingly characteristic.

There were present many magnates of Methodism. Dr. Bunting, Mr. Lomas, Mr. Scott, Dr. Beaumont, &c., were in their places. Mr. Vasey coming in late, the following interlocutions ensued. *Sec.*—"Mr. Vasey, you must please to hand me sixpence." *Mr. V.*—"Sixpence! how so?" *Sec.*—"You were not in when I had finished reading the names, and we have agreed to pay a fine of sixpence when we are too late to answer to our names." *Mr. V.*—"You may have agreed, but I never did." *Sec.*—"Well, but it is the rule." *Mr. V.*—"It may be your rule, but it is not mine; I was no party to the making of the rule." *Dr. Bunting*, an ill-suppressed smile playing upon his firm lips, "But, Mr. Vasey, if we old men agree to pay, and don't object to it, why should a young man like you?" *Mr. V.*—"Oh, doctor, that isn't it at all, but I do not understand by what law a ministers' meeting can enforce a fine on any member without his previous consent. However, I suppose I must pay my footing." So saying he threw down his sixpence with an implied wonder at the metropolitan way of doing business.

That a young man, fresh from the country, should assert himself so freely and fearlessly in the presence of so many dignitaries, was likely to strike his compeers as very audacious. We have manifested, however, in this incident, some of Mr. Vasey's most striking characteristics. In him the experience and wisdom of the man of business were united with the simplicity and playfulness of a little child; and like a child he wore his heart outside, speaking just as he thought, and concealing nothing. Moreover, he was naturally ardent, impulsive, and humorous. And never, perhaps, was he more exuberantly happy and light-hearted than now. He had within him the peace and joy which the assurance of God's favour imparts; his immense capacities had found wider scope, for their exercise; and his domestic happiness was great and unclouded.

The self-assertion which was apparent on all occasions likely to call it forth, was not the offspring of ignorance, nor of forwardness; neither was it expressed in the spirit of dogmatism; but was the natural outflow of a mind of such power and resources, accustomed to exert influence and to receive homage.

Though Mr. Vasey fully recognised the claims of position, and never failed to render *honour* to whom honour was due: he was not one to *court* the favour of the rich or the great, and in avoiding the appearance of servility in the presence of persons of either of these classes, his deportment verged on the opposite extreme. Neither was he likely to merge his own strong individuality amid the opinions or actions of others.

Hence, on his first introduction to his fathers and brethren in the ministry in London, he was not oppressed by feelings of awe or diffidence; but rather elated by emotions of pleasure and happiness; and the argument in reference to the fine was simply an expression of the hilarity, sportiveness, and independence of his nature.

It may not be unfitting to notice here other distinctive phases of Mr. Vasey's many-sided character, which, though not disclosed in the foregoing incident, were manifested on occasions during the six years of his ministerial life in the Metropolis.

Undoubtedly his straightforwardness and integrity of principle may be ranked amongst his chief personal characteristics. Hence, "he greatly disliked the affected avoidance of common forms of expression." He was the enemy of everything unreal and unrighteous, either in word or deed. And when thrown into contact with persons of these habits or practices, he manifested such a degree of *brusquerie et d'austerité* of manner, as for the time being overshadowed his natural courtesy and kindliness. His strong feelings found their outlet in strong words and vigorous action.

Mr. Vasey soon became at home in his new sphere of engagements. The circuit stewards,* (honoured men

* The late Messrs. Buttress and Vanner.

whose names and good deeds can never be forgotten in Methodism), welcomed and encouraged him. The people of his congregation showed him kindness, and with his colleagues he laboured happily.

How readily he entered into the details of his official duties as Educational Secretary, and how efficiently he conducted them are testified by those with whom he was associated.

The Rev. John Lomas bears his testimony to the distinguished services rendered by Mr. Vasey, during his three years' appointment in the City-road circuit. And the Rev. J. C. Pengelly, with whom he was united both in circuit and educational work, writes—"Mr. Vasey and I were associated for about two years, from the Conference of 1845 to that of 1847. The first year would be much occupied, apart from circuit duties, with the business of the educational committee. It then consisted of the examination and selection of candidates for training, and in making grants of outfits to schools. These matters involved an extensive correspondence.

"At the Conference of 1846, it was expected that some Government plan for education would be introduced to Parliament, and a special committee was appointed in relation to it. That committee met on the 16th March, 1847, to consider the minutes of council of the previous August and December. From that period till about the middle of April, Mr. Vasey would be constantly employed either in committees, or in matters belonging to the educational department. The meetings, as you may remember, were often protracted until late at night. Many things seemed to require no ordinary labour and zeal on the part of the officers of the committee. I have a gratifying remembrance of the readiness with which Mr. Vasey entered into every part of the work—of his intelligence in dealing with the complicated questions which often arose—his strong views on the religious bearing of the question as it related to our own body, and the duties that necessarily devolved on our connexion. The subject was regarded by him to be of vital import-

ance, not only to Methodism, but to the country at large; and he heartily devoted himself to the consideration and elucidation of it."

Truly Mr. Vasey's life now knew little leisure. As the importance of day-school education on Stow's system came to be more extensively recognized, schools were raised in all parts of the country; and the demand for teachers being great prospectively, the numbers of candidates for training at the Normal Seminary, Glasgow, rapidly increased. The correspondence, &c., through this source alone, was not trifling. It included questioning on theology and every branch of a good ordinary English education. Then the return papers were to be examined and reported upon; and lastly, the candidates were to be summoned for oral examination. And not a few day-school teachers, now growing old in the service, could testify to the kind sympathy and encouragement manifested by Mr. Vasey, when, coming as strangers to the great metropolis, they had to undergo the trying ordeal of an examination in the presence of a committee composed of London ministers and laymen.

As Mr. Pengelly indicates, the business of the educational committee became increasingly heavy and anxious from month to month of this period, and frequent and protracted meetings were held to deliberate on Government schemes. But, notwithstanding that Mr. Vasey was indefatigable in his attention to his extra official work, he maintained his efficiency as a minister from year to year. During a time of extraordinary pressure, he was observed returning home late one Saturday evening from the Centenary Hall, by a hearer at City-road, who remarked to a friend, "we shall have a poor time in the morning," naturally concluding, that as the appointed minister had been occupied with secular business up to so late an hour on the eve of the Sabbath, he would be ill-prepared for Sabbath duties. The hearer, however, afterwards declared that the service had been a more than usually profitable one.

Mr. Vasey now reaped the advantage of his business

aptitude—his habitual devoutness of spirit, and of his early painstaking in sermonizing. "Necessitas non habit legem." With so many active duties devolving upon him, much leisure for study and quiet retirement was out of the question. Yet he was not the man to yield to lower the standard either of his personal experience or his pulpit ministrations. How then was the life of God to be sustained in his own soul, and his power and success as a minister to be maintained? He had rich and plenteous stores of Divine truth at command; but how could he gain opportunities to draw and arrange materials from these stores, for the benefit of his congregation, when, perhaps, he had to proceed to fulfil an appointment, direct from exciting and absorbing debates in committee, or from desk work? This could only be accomplished by acquiring the habit of abstracting his attention from external surroundings. And this he did at length so fully, that in the whirl of busy thoroughfares, and in crowded omnibusses, he could make sermons and secure prayerful communion with his Divine Master and Friend.

This power of mental abstraction and concentration proved invaluable in the exigencies of Mr. Vasey's future course. He became able to pursue a train of thought even whilst engaged in conversation on other subjects, and could preach uninterruptedly though a child might cry never so loudly, or coughs might be never so prevalent in his congregation.

But this "ready mastery of his mental resources" was only gained by a gradual process. And meanwhile, he was occasionally subject to some degree of embarrassment, which betrayed itself in a slight hesitation in speaking. This was rather surprising, considering his natural facility of speech. But the fact was, that though in seasons of emergency he could submit to be less free, he would not consent to be less correct in expression.

In commencing to preach, Mr. Vasey had been tempted to cultivate a love of popularity, and for a short time he exercised his talents with that view. But with his solemn

conviction of the preciousness and peril of souls, he could not continue in this course. It was speedily relinquished, and henceforth the ambition of his heart was not to shine, nor to please, but to be useful. And to this end every faculty was at length made subservient. This aim could be traced not merely in the phraseology, but in the diction of his compositions. The latter was simple, forcible, various and appropriate. His own taste, reality, and earnestness, led him to shun strictly, an affected or bombastic style of language; and to a preference for the expressive rather than the elegant. Hence, no matter what was the exigency of the moment, he did not descend to the use of expletives, but would in mind reject one word after another, until the one exactly suited to his purpose came.

This hesitation was observable occasionally throughout the whole of Mr. Vasey's ministerial course, but his eloquence increased and became more impassioned and powerful, as the tone of his piety and earnestness deepened, and he came to be more habituated to impromptu speaking, or in other words, as "he was led to throw overboard everything in his preaching which savoured of mere intellectualism," and to depend more fully on the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit in his services in the pulpit or on the platform.

Yet though there might now and then be detected a want of freedom in the delivery of his sermons, whilst such a varied and incessant round of duties occupied his thoughts and time, there never was lacking in his services that holy influence, by which the dead in sin are quickened into spiritual life, and believers are urged to the pursuit of holiness. Mr. Vasey's ministrations in the City-road, as in every circuit, were characterized by great earnestness and power, and were adapted not only to rouse sinners to a sense of their danger, and to lead them to the Saviour, but also to instruct and edify those who had already found Him. He faithfully and plainly declared "the whole counsel of God." Hence, whilst he more frequently and fully proclaimed justification by faith, and

fellowship with God through the Spirit, he continued to inculcate righteousness of life. He taught convincingly that the believer must evidence his faith by his works.

In his first sermon in the City-road Circuit, which during the course of his ministry there, went the round of the chapels, Mr. Vasey so clearly embodies his views of the exalted privilege of the Christian, and his own standard of the Christian life, that we greatly regret our limits forbid its publication.

To attain to the privileged position of Enoch was Mr. Vasey's purpose from the commencement of his Christian career. And who, that was intimately associated with him, could doubt that he realized the blessedness of a close walk with God during many years of his earthly pilgrimage. Religion with him did not consist in frames and feelings. It was a life-influencing, sin-subduing, self-renouncing principle. His walk and conversation were the living evidence and expression of the sincerity and reality of the inner life; and all his duties were pervaded by the all-leavening power of vital Godliness.

It was Mr. Vasey's wont in this sphere of labour, as elsewhere, to call a prayer meeting at the close of the Sabbath evening service, and to invite especially those of his congregations to remain who were concerned about their spiritual condition, and gathering as many of the prayer leaders about him as he could muster, he engaged with them in the services of the hour. Never was he more happy than when employed in pointing sinners to the Cross of Christ; and if in response to his encouraging appeals, persons came forward and knelt at the rail of the communion (thus expressing their penitence for sin and desire for salvation), his joy overpowered his sense of fatigue, and he would remain until late at night to counsel and pray with them.

No matter how pressing his secular duties, the business of soul-saving remained supreme with Mr. Vasey; and no department of circuit-work was neglected by him. The daily records of this busy period sufficiently attest the variety and extent of his labours. We think few

ministers exempted from all official services but those pertaining to the ministry, could present a longer list of fulfilled ministerial engagements than does Mr. Vasey's diary: heavy as were the demands upon his time and energies in his position of Educational Secretary.

He had, on an average, three week night preaching appointments; met a Society Class on Thursday mornings; conducted a Bible Class for young men on Friday evenings; and never avoidably absented himself from the weekly prayer or band meetings. His visits to Sunday and day-schools were frequent. And, though systematic pastoral visitation was impossible, the weekly catalogue of visited families is far from small.

The memoranda of what Mr. Vasey termed his "extra parochial services" are striking for their number and diversity. Yet, notwithstanding these multifarious engagements, he contrived, whilst in the City-road Circuit, to write out many valuable lessons *seriatim* for his Bible Class; and he frequently took part in special services.

The writer is here reminded of a series of revival services in which he engaged singly at Wilderness-row Chapel, in the winter of 1845. Being encouraged by the successful results of the first week's efforts, despite a severe cold, he continued them throughout another week. And the remembrance of the way in which the members of that little society upheld their Pastor by their prayers, and testified their sympathy and solicitude in more substantial forms, is amongst the pleasant and grateful memories of Wilderness-row.

At the Conference of 1846, by a change of appointments, Mr. Vasey gained the Revs. John Rattenbury and Alfred Barrett as colleagues. The former was then in the zenith of his popularity and success, and soon eclipsed his youngest colleague. But Mr. Vasey manifested his incapacity of jealousy or envy, by encouraging the people to hear Mr. Rattenbury, even at the expense of a diminished congregation to himself; he could sincerely rejoice in good effected, no matter who was the instrument; and during the whole of his career as a minister,

he was ever ready to uphold and to assist his brethren, even at the cost of self-sacrifice.

The past year, notwithstanding many toils and a few trials, had been one of true happiness. The experience of town-lodgings not having been altogether comfortable, a house had been kindly furnished before it was due, and the fifth minister and his wife had fully entered upon domestic experiences. Mr. Vasey's good mother, writing to congratulate him on being settled so comfortably, after advising him in respect of his ministry, and the care of his own soul, cautions him against too great fondness for the creature, telling him his wife may be his darling, but not his idol; and that God will not suffer us to give that to the creature which is only due to himself.

On December the 12th, 1846, the birth of a daughter was to Mr. Vasey a new source of gladness. Mary Jane, the firstborn of his family, was the child of his fondest hopes and brightest anticipations. Her birth furnished a wider scope for the exercise of his home affections; not the best trained nurse nor the most tender mother could be more apt or gentle than was he in the handling of a baby, neither could exercise more winning ways. If he had but five minutes leisure, a toss in the air or a lullaby song (if needed) were bestowed, and with never failing effect.

An incident illustrative of his efficiency in this department, and of his strong domestic sensibilities, may be mentioned. When Mary Jane was six months old, her mother took her with her on a visit to her parents. After the lapse of a few weeks Mr. Vasey, obtaining leave of absence for a few days, joined his wife in the expectation of her return with him. It was, however, deemed advisible that for health's sake her stay in the north should be prolonged. On this Mr. Vasey insisted upon taking back, if not his wife, his child; and carried off the latter in triumph. The journey, a distance of over two hundred and fifty miles, was accomplished very satisfactorily, but a like achievement was never again attempted.

In July of this year, Mrs. Vasey had a dangerous illness, and for sometime her life was in peril. This was a season of deep anxiety to Mr. Vasey, and when she was restored, his thankfulness was unbounded. The attack, however, left its effects in her enfeebled constitution, and was productive of future suffering. This was the first dark shadow cast upon their domestic joys, and it stretched itself over the whole of their after united life's pathway. Yet, though the presence of this shadow was never fully withdrawn, it was occasionally lifted, and in course of time, came to be regarded as a necessary and friendly screen from the too bright, and often scorching and blighting rays of the sun of earthly honour, prosperity, and happiness.

The sun of prosperity is not favourable to the full development of the Christian graces. It is in the furnace of affliction that the refining process is conducted and completed. True gold will bear the test of the crucible, and is proved by it. Mr. Spurgeon writes:—"The Lord afflicts his servants *to glorify Himself*, for He is greatly glorified in the graces of His people, which are His own handiwork. When tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope, the Lord is honoured by these growing virtues. We should never know the music of the harp if the strings were left untouched; nor enjoy the juice of the grape if it were not trodden in the winepress; nor discover the sweet perfume of cinnamon if it were not pressed and beaten; nor feel the warmth if the coals were not utterly consumed." So God uses with His chosen instruments such means as are suited to develope and sanctify the resources of their nature; and if his servants, true to their vows of dedication, yield themselves to His will, the issue must be their perfect adaptability for the service to which He calls them. Thus David, the "man after God's own heart," was, through his early hardships, educated for his high destiny. And thus was St. Paul fitted by his varied, heavy, and sanctified trials, to minister instruction, comfort and edification to the Churches.

And thus likewise was Thomas Vasey prepared for his course of usefulness. But for his complicated trials the most noble qualities of his nature would never have been discovered nor exercised. His was just such a temperament as was likely to glorify God most in the furnace. His spiritual education had been proceeding from the day of his conversion, and through it he had obtained a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. The heroic in his nature had been fully developed. He was able to fight himself and to lead others to the conflict against the world, the flesh, and the devil. But every affection of his heart, every sensibility of his nature, must be subordinated to the service of Him to whom he had given himself freely in body, soul, and spirit. There were in him, depths of tenderness and stores of cheerfulness, which must bear fruit to the glory of his Master. And, that they did this abundantly, his faith, hope, and love beaming forth more brightly with every accession of trial, and reflecting their lustre both in his public and private life, we trust these pages may evidence conclusively.

During Mr. Vasey's sojourn in London, he took a deep interest in young people (ministers' children especially) who were separated from the shielding influences and comforts of home. To these, the hospitalities of his house and the benefit of his counsel were freely tendered.

The appended letter, received from the son of a minister, in reply to a request to be assisted with some recollections of Mr. Vasey when in the City-road Circuit, refers to this fact, and contains too, many interesting notices of his characteristics, ministerially and personally.

19, *Darnley-road, Hackney, E. June 30th*, 1873.

MY DEAR MRS. VASEY,

SO MANY have died or left the Circuit who were at Wilderness-row when Mr. Vasey laboured there that I find it almost impossible to obtain from that quarter such materials as you require.

I remember personally that Mr. Matthews was very much impressed by his prayer at the first Quarterly Meeting held after his appointment to London, and kindred spirits now in the better world rejoiced in the

pastoral relation which Mr. Vasey sustained to them, whilst they feasted on his pulpit deliverances. I need hardly remind you of the late William Bourne, Messrs. Hazell, Bouffler, Stanley, and others who have "fallen asleep" in Jesus.

In later years, when travelling through Daventry, I was in the habit of spending a little time with Mrs. Billingham. She invariably spoke of Mr. Vasey with the warmest affection, and testified of the profit derived by Mr. Billingham under his ministry. In the kindly and reciprocal company of Mr. Vasey (whose cheery laugh would have horrified any Pharisaic ascetic, while the most sanctimonious would have failed to detect anything contrary to purity and love) the geniality which beamed in Mr. Billingham's face lighted up yet more brightly. These have all died in the faith; and among those who survive their old companions are Mr. and Mrs. Stansell, who linger on, and whose cherished memories (and the sunny ones too) are many of them associated with Mr. Vasey at Wilderness-row.

As I was then a stripling in London and much confined to business, I had but few opportunities, comparatively, of seeing preachers or people; but I am (and ever must be) your debtor for many happy hours I had for worship or recreation, spent in your society.

On one occasion I remember Mr. Vasey saying, "As long as Methodist preachers' sons or children will come to see me, I should like them to feel my door is always open to them; they are always welcome to my table." This and similar warm-hearted utterances were the natural outflow of a most generous disposition; and the kindness which Methodist preachers' children experience from their fathers' brethren, was consistently and fully developed in Mr. Vasey's entire course.

I remember at this time being much impressed by his earnestness, and laboriousness, and ready fulfilment of every duty regardless of men's praise or blame, and with evident reference to the recompense of reward on high, rather than the good opinion of men here.

As it was our privilege and delight in subsequent years to be under Mr. Vasey's charge, we could see how he had retained these features in an intensified degree; and his deep concern for the salvation of those with whom he was connected by Methodist usages, led him fearlessly to reprove what he saw to be evil. And just as many patients would, if possible, escape from the hands of a skilful surgeon, so those upon whom his private or public rebukes fell, would seek escape; though I have seen *some such*, afterward very thankful for the plain and faithful dealing of God's servant, who wounded that he might heal.

Another feature of Mr. Vasey's character which impressed me, was his aversion (which one might characterise by the strong word hatred) to everything hypocritical, mean, hollow, or pretentious. This was not to be wondered at, for he was so straightforward, honourable, real, and generous, that his whole nature recoiled from the opposite qualities of heart.

During his first ministrations at Hackney his preaching was characterised by the glowing and impassioned fervour, the yearning for the conversion of those who heard him, which afterward in his second sojourn beamed with intense brightness, and was as an all-consuming

zeal. It was this which led him to cry out, in the vehemence of his soul: "Try to make the chapel too hot for sinners; you should make it so hot that it will either burn them out, or melt them into penitence." His vehemence was united with the tenderness of a child. The voice which now was firm in scathing denunciations would presently be choked in beseeching entreaty. Personal and relative experience, which awoke all his sympathies and struck the chords of both joy and sorrow, were pressed into the service of "winning souls," while science and art were to him handmaids ever ready to furnish illustration. It was thus, when urging young men to serve God, he compared them unconverted and unconsecrated to a balloon, beautiful, but, till inflated, useless; and then he appealed to those present to give themselves up to the ennobling, purifying, renewing influences of the Holy Spirit, which would make their lives sublime and their characters glorious.

During his short sojourn in the Islington Circuit, in addition to his ordinary Circuit duties he had the double secretaryship of the Committee of Privileges and of Education. Our people sometimes complain of want of pastoral visitation, and this is well, in so far as it indicates the sincere affection which is cherished towards our ministers—an affection which it is most desirable for the ministers in this way to strengthen. It is, however, in many instances impossible, and so it was at the time we are naming in Mr. Vasey's career. It was then no uncommon thing for him to be busily occupied in examination of candidates, teachers' answers, and correspondence, till three o'clock in the morning. He was often obliged to do this work with a wet towel wrapped round his head, to soothe his over-wrought brain. This would go on till he was laid aside for some days, and even then he would sit up in bed and conduct his correspondence. It is manifest that pastoral visitation was out of the question, and as he frequently preached when he could hardly stand, it is equally manifest that his devotion to his work was a ruling passion, which the waters of difficulty could not quench. But it is needless to enumerate these and other special qualifications for usefulness which so eminently made our dear friend truly a "burning and shining light."

Through these he was, however strange as it may appear, often misunderstood by those whose standard was not so high, and who did not drink into his spirit of all-absorbing earnestness and life-long self-denial. He towered above those who grovelled in earthly things; they disliked the heights to which they did not wish to climb, and his close wrestling with the conscience and reason of the apathetic, lukewarm, or backsliding, if it did not arouse and overcome, was sure to issue in distaste, if not open dissatisfaction.

The fulness and freshness of the Gospel was to him an ocean of love in which he delighted to bathe his spirit. He dealt out the "feast of fat things" provided in the Spirit's dispensation with a liberal hand, and he appeared to revel in the abundance of the grace, which made present salvation attainable by those to whom he delighted to offer the benefits of the atonement. He denounced the *miserable* preaching of those who say "there is *only* one repentance" of a death bed character recorded in the Bible. The prayer, the forgiveness,

the death of the penitent were to him a source of wealthy illustration, of abounding love and tender long-suffering, by which he encouraged none to despair; and the chivalrous, generous, cheerful spirit, which would have made him a brave soldier and choice companion and spirit in any profession or walk of life, reflected itself fully in his arguments and appeals when discharging his duties as an ambassador for Christ. It is very easy to understand how such an one was loved most, when best known, and also how his warm temperament, personal experience, and vivid imagination, while they furnished him with floods of consolation for the mournful, sorrowing, yet spiritually-minded, caused his rebukes of sin in all forms to be searching as the light and withering as the electric flash. His addresses to children were thought by many to be only second, if not indeed equal, to those of the late Rev. Alex. Fletcher, and his manly sympathy and domestic knowledge at once found a way to the heart of mothers, with whom he was of one accord in the important sphere which they occupy in training the young. Seldom, we think, has so manly a heart been at the same time almost feminine in the intensity of tender affection and quickly perceptive love. It is no uncommon thing to hear him spoken of by those who knew him as a bright day closed, a light quenched, a well-spring dried up, and a friend lost. He is not lost, but gone before; the savour of his work remains in many who are following after him; his day is but begun, never to close; his light is that of a star for ever and ever, and his spirit satisfies itself in the fulness of the river of life, which flows for ever in the City of God.

It would be easy to say even more, but I hope this may supply you with some material such as you wish.

With love to your family, I remain, my dear Mrs. Vasey,

Yours truly,

J. W. TABRAHAM.

This letter also alludes to Mr. Vasey's life in his next circuit, and his return to London several years afterwards. In the prospect of his removal from City-road, he had accepted an invitation to labour in Bristol. But the Conference, considering it expedient he should remain in London, appointed him to Islington (the eighth London Circuit).

This was a disarrangement of his plans; but in accordance with his principles, he acquiesced in the appointment, believing it to be an intimation of the will of Divine Providence, and in the first week in September he entered upon his new sphere buoyantly and hopefully.

Mr. Vasey was appointed third amongst the Islington staff of ministers, and he had for his colleagues the Revs. John Scott, Dr. Etheridge, Edward Lightwood, and

Michael C. Taylor. His house being situated on Stamford Hill, his family found the change very agreeable; particularly as the short removal would permit their occasional intercourse with friends in their late circuit.

His appointment was not regarded with much favour. There was a strong prejudice against *official men*, and the first Sabbath he appeared at Liverpool-road Chapel the stewards were rather cool in their greeting. His sermon, however, changed their feelings in the matter, and it is believed they never afterwards regretted his being sent to them.

Though additional labours and responsibilities were devolved upon him, through his designation to the office of Secretary to the Committee of Privileges, his heart was given to his circuit duties. He did not for a moment lose sight of his one great business, which was that of a fisher of men. He never let down his net without looking for a draught; and grievous was his disappointment, when after toiling hard, he found he had caught nothing. Especially did he throw his whole soul into special services, held throughout the circuit at the commencement of the year 1849. And not only did he exert all his powers at his own services to bring sinners to Christ, and to build up believers in their most holy faith; but, on several occasions, after taking his ordinary appointments at a distance, he hastened to assist his brethren at the scene of the revival; and with all the energy of which he was capable, joined with them in prayer and exhortation, exhibiting at such seasons more holy confidence than if he had himself been the preacher.

Mr. Vasey was well fitted by his own early conflicts to deal with inquirers after salvation; he had so thorough a knowledge of the workings of the human heart, and of the devices of the devil. Hence, until he had ascertained that there was true and deep penitence for sin, and determination to forsake it, he would not offer the mercy of Christ. He never applied the balm of Gilead until he had probed the wound, and found it ready for the process of healing; thus ensuring a complete cure.

Consequently, persons brought to God under his ministry, having built their hopes upon a firm foundation, were, in most cases, steadfast and immoveable in their Christian character.

On May 12th, 1849, Mr. Vasey left home early on business connected with his official positions, and returning in the evening, his first son was placed in his arms, having been born during his father's absence. Two days after this event he had to leave home to attend a great educational meeting in Manchester. The added jottings give the basis of his speech of this date.

Manchester, 14th May, 1849.—Regret Mr. Scott's absence on account of importance of meeting—deep impression of its solemnity.

Cause of Childhood.—My own child, observant, susceptible, impressible, plastic, irritative, absorbing like a plant every surrounding element into its moral being. No peculiar claim on sympathy, care, and culture.

Pressing Claims of the Times.—Children not as they used to be, sheltered amidst the charities of home, under the control of their parents, and learning, through the necessary and salutary discipline of that little domestic world, those habits of submission to authority, of mutual forbearance, order, and harmony which are the best preparatives for the larger world outside. These families amongst the poor are now no more: broken up by the uncontrollable progress of an artificial state of society. In town and country, agricultural and manufacturing districts alike, children must work for themselves and their parents, and at an early age become independent of all control. This state of things generates a precocity of mind, self-determining power, promptitude in action, and intense energy of conduct altogether unprecedented and surprising. Quote boy driving his own bargain at school. For the new state of things we are to be prepared; it is the new, great, pressing want of the times—it cannot be overlooked a moment longer. It has gone too far, and been too long disregarded already. Amongst this class the enemy of souls has been active, and his emissaries have been organising their plans. We have penny theatres, penny gin-shops, houses of resort for infamous purposes for children. While we have slept, the enemy has been sowing tares, and already the harvest thickens to our view. Of the whole number of offenders in 1846 31 per cent. were under twenty; and in Birmingham in 1841 one-half known or suspected offenders were under fifteen. Such a state of things cannot but be dangerous—it is horrifying to contemplate it. Witness the Continent, Milan, Paris. What is the remedy?

What kind of education? *Sham?* Combat the notion of secular education only. What connection is there between secular knowledge and morality? What does History say? Greece, Rome, Egypt, India, with their sculpture, architecture, painting, poetry, literature, and their demoralised and degraded populations, joyless

homes, and infamous social vices, all tell a sad tale of the inefficacy of any *godless* system of instruction. It must be religious—based upon the Word of God—not merely read technically or learnt by rote, but exhibited in the hands of a teacher as the source from whence he draws all his instruction, the authority to which he appeals, the standard to which he himself conforms, and of which he is a living embodiment. It must be chiefly a course of moral training, in which a careful supervision is maintained over all the conduct: moral uses made of every circumstance or incident, moral maxims adduced from every feature of secular knowledge, and the discipline of moral force maintained. It must comprise a good, useful, secular education adapted to the condition of the population, recommending itself to them on the score of utility, desiring not so much to cram them.

For some time past the desirability of establishing an institution in London for the training of Wesleyan day-school teachers had been acknowledged, and for this object a suitable site had been secured at Westminster in 1847. At length, after much deliberative consultation with regard to "ways and means," the erection of a Normal College was fully decided upon, and on the 27th of September, 1849, the foundation stone was laid by Thomas Farmer, Esq.

With his usual energy, Mr. Vasey devoted himself to the extra duties devolving upon him, whilst the building operations were in progress. That the arrangements of the committee might be fully carried out, he entered into all the details of the erection, manifesting throughout its course, up to the time of his leaving London in 1851, most untiring diligence and interest. And great was his happiness when the advancement made, permitted a partial opening of the College.

Other service likewise devolved upon him through this erection. For the purpose of raising subscriptions towards completing the cost thereof, a series of public meetings were held in the leading provincial towns, most of which Mr. Vasey was required to attend, in company with the Rev. John Scott, and other ministers, and also laymen. Many hurried journeys were undertaken, and not unfrequently, to economise his time for other pressing duties, he travelled a good part of the night, arriving at home again in the early morning.

But the greatest mental and physical strain of Mr.

Vasey's life in the Islington Circuit, arose out of the agitation then prevailing throughout the entire connexion. With his brethren he endured much anxiety and distress. He had witnessed the blighting influences of a former disruption, and greatly deprecated a renewal of the painful scenes and effects of that season of strife. He was too jealous of the honour of his Master, and of the prosperity of His work to hold any compromise with the disturbers of Zion, and by word and action expressed his disapprobation. It was, perhaps, natural for the few who suffered excision at his hand to complain of harsh dealing; but though, in after years, he heartily welcomed the return of some of these to the Wesleyan fold, he never was heard to express regret for the line of conduct he pursued in those evil times, and, without doubt, simply acted according to his convictions of duty. And though his manner did not betray it, the anguish of his soul on these occasions was intense. Mr. Vasey had acquired great command over his feelings; self-possession was one of his most distinguishing characteristics. Hence, outward emotion was suppressed, his bearing was firm, and however excessive might be his mental suffering, it was not indicated, excepting in the countenance. There, however, a physiognomist might have discovered every agitation of his heart reflected; and never did human face more strikingly disclose the workings of the soul. Probably, had the depth of his sensibilities been more generally and fully understood, he would have been spared many a sleepless night and many a heart-ache.

It is generally known that the special object of the Wesleyan Committee of Privileges "is to guard the rights and privileges of the Connexion." Its constitution includes both preachers and laymen; and its duties are exercised in affording advice and assistance in cases involving any attempt to encroach on the property of the Connexion; and in "cases of exigency requiring prompt communication with the Government or with Parliament." In his official connection with this Committee, Mr. Vasey had

heavy work arising out of both these contingencies. During the progress of the "Agitation," endeavours were made by the agitators to gain possession of many of the chapels, and his correspondence, &c., from this source was inconceivably onerous and anxious. And contemporaneous with the disturbances in the Wesleyan community, was the excitement throughout this realm in connection with the introduction into Parliament of the "Ecclesiastical Titles Bill," in which good Protestants generally, recognised the aggressive action of the Papacy, and consequent danger to the rights and liberties of Protestant Englishmen. The Wesleyan body united with other Protestant communities in expressing their disapprobation in the form of petitions to both Houses of Parliament against the "Papal aggression." On behalf of his own communion, Mr. Vasey was required to present many of these petitions, and not seldom in his attendance upon members, the greater part of his night's rest was sacrificed. It happened on one occasion Mr. Vasey's presence in the House of Commons was imperatively demanded; and he had to proceed straight from consultation in Committee without finding any means of communication with his wife, who was some miles distant from the Centenary Hall, where the Committee meetings were held. At this period the cholera was at the height of its ravages, and many persons leaving home well, were brought back ill or dying. Mr. Vasey had left his home in the morning purposing to return early, and when a late hour arrived, and he did not make his appearance, Mrs. Vasey, after the rest of the household had retired to rest, prepared to keep a lonely and anxious vigil. The hours of the night wore slowly on, and the time for the family to be again astir had nearly come, when a cab drove up to the garden gate, and Mrs. Vasey rushing out, dreading to find her husband laid at the bottom of the vehicle, found him alive and well, though worn with the excitement and want of rest. The debate of the night had been important to the interests of religion, and Mr. Vasey had been in attendance, probably

with other members of the Committee, to watch and report upon proceedings.

It is gratifying to us to insert here recollections and impressions of Mr. Vasey, more particularly referring to his sojourn in London, contributed by those who had, apart from his own relations, the most intimate knowledge of the character of his life and labours.

The succeeding sketch is by the pen of a familiar friend.

My acquaintance with Mr. Vasey commenced at the Conference of 1848, when he was appointed to the Islington Circuit. He resided at Stamford-hill, and had the pastoral oversight of the Stoke Newington and Tottenham Societies (Stoke Newington has since been made the head of a circuit).

He entered on his new sphere of labour in the dawn of troublous times, and during his three years' residence amongst us, the great adversary of souls found many agents to carry on his work of spoliation in the Wesleyan Methodist Societies throughout the length and breadth of this kingdom.

Mr. Vasey was a faithful man, faithful to his vows of consecration to God and to the Church of his choice; hence he gave no quarter to the enemy, and enemies there were not a few in those parts of the circuit where he had most frequently to labour.

His measures were very decided, some thought a little too much so in some instances; but the flock was being scattered, and his Divine Master's honour was involved, and that was enough to urge him on to action.

I accompanied him to a week-night service at one of the outlying stations of that large circuit, where he had to preach, and afterwards to renew the tickets of, I believe, the only class connected with the place. Rumours had reached him of the disaffection of the leader, so without any preliminaries he inquired, "What have you been *doing* the past quarter? Mind, I do not ask what you have been *feeling*, but what you have been *doing?*" The prompt and unblushing reply was, "All in my power to 'stop the supplies,' and crush the tyranny of

the Wesleyan Conference." Mr. Vasey, looking on the few members present, inquired, "And what have these been doing?" "Working with me heart and soul in the glorious cause of liberty." "And are you all of the same mind to-night?" "Yes, one and all." He then stood up, and in the most awfully solemn manner and language, warned them of their error, and the fearful consequences if persisted in. He then pronounced the class defunct, put the class-book into his pocket, and wished them all a courteous good-night. They were not prepared for such a finale; they had come six to one to oppose this abettor of "priestly oppression" in Wesleyan Methodism.

Instances of this sort might be multiplied, but one will suffice to show something of his firmness and decision of character.

At this time he was comparatively a young man; yet it was easy to discover his talent as a preacher, and no doubt was left on the minds of those who knew him, that should his life be spared, he would leave his mark on the Connexion. This, by the grace of God, he has done.

He preached, lived, and laboured to save souls, believing that all the powers of man are meant to serve God, and all the influence of man to be baptized from on high, and dedicated to the glory of Him who has "redeemed us by His blood."

At this period of his ministry he was not a "Son of Thunder;" his forte was his marvellous powers of persuasion, "beseeching men to be reconciled to God," with an earnestness and energy exceeding all my resources of expression. He was never satisfied with his Sabbath work unless he saw results, and not unfrequently at a friend's house at the close of the day, has he walked the room in an agony of soul, because, as he said, "I have seen no sign, no sign that my Master's message has been received, that good has been done."

He would then request us to kneel with him in prayer. These were times of nearness to, and holy familiarity

with Father, Son, and Spirit, which can never be forgotten by those who were privileged to unite with him.

At the commencement of the winter season he would say, "This is our harvest time; if we lose this we lose all; something must be done, the hearts of the people must be reached." Special services were held, in which he took an active part; on these occasions his addresses were pointed and powerful. While speaking from the words "Am I my brother's keeper?" a lady (member of Society) sitting next me was so powerfully wrought upon by a sense of her unfaithfulness to God and His cause, that she exclaimed audibly, "here sits a guilty woman.' These services were very blessed in their results, and many were gathered into the Heavenly Shiloh, who now live to bless the name of Mr. Vasey as the instrument of their conversion to God.

Still greater, notwithstanding such results, was his success in arousing to action the slumbering energies of those who had a name and place among the people of God, rightly judging, as he often said, "if we get the Church right, as a necessary consequence the world of sinners will be converted." His habits of self-denial, his devotion to, and energy in his work, are living comments on the doctrines and precepts which he taught.

As a pastor he was diligent, kind, and faithful. Always cheerful, the heaven-lit joy of his countenance told of the heaven that dwelt in his soul.

On one of his pastoral visits he inquired, "How do you read this text, 'There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth?'" It was replied "as I find it." He then requested me to repeat it; when I got to the words "joy in the presence," he asked, "whose is the joy spoken of?" I paused, at length said, "I suppose the joy of the angels." "But," said he, "the text does not say so; it says 'in the presence of the angels.'" Then, as if his whole soul was wrapt in the mystery of redemption, he exclaimed, "I believe the joy spoken of is the joy of the Redeemer in seeing of the travail of His soul in the conversion of sinners."

In this way he sought to instruct the people of his charge in his visits to their homes, asking how they understood a word or text; have you thought much of the meaning of the little word "If," so often found in the New Testament? You could not escape a reply. The following Sunday, he preached from the words, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you," &c. I should think till then that congregation never knew the full import of the word "If," and possibly had not thought particularly about it. By these means he left in the social circle a subject for profitable thought and improvement. He had likewise an adaptability, from his strength of moral courage, for making his way into the houses of those who were living in utter neglect of religion. I will give one instance. He called on an elderly, wealthy, miserly man one bitterly cold day. The first topic was the sufferings of the poor in such inclement weather. A little help was solicited towards a fund, then being raised, for their relief; his appeal was met thus, "Indeed, indeed, sir, I cannot afford it, the times are bad, very bad." Mr. Vasey, nothing daunted, still urged the claims of these sufferers, but his eloquence availed naught. He rose as if to go; looking at the man, and feeling in his heart intense pity for him, he said, "This is our first interview, it may be the last, as you have passed your three score and ten years. Allow me to pray with you before we separate," and without waiting for his assent or refusal, Mr. Vasey commenced. I have heard it remarked, no good comes of "praying at people," here is an exception. He told God all about this man; his hardness of heart in shutting up his bowels of compassion for the poor. He heard an occasional groan (of disapprobation as he thought), but he did not give over till he had pleaded with God to bring him to a better mind, by changing his heart. He had scarcely risen from his knees, when the man said, "A marvellous prayer that, sir, marvellous, worth five pounds any day," at the same time placing that amount in Mr. Vasey's hand. The first time, he often used to say, that a money

value was put upon his prayers. There were many subsequent interviews, more of these "marvellous" prayers put up for his conversion. And to say the least of it, he obtained an intelligent appreciation of the importance of spiritual and eternal things. With what results the day of eternity will disclose.

I have now to speak of him as a friend. "These grow not thick on every bough," as many have learned from sorrowful experience, and I reckon it one among the many mercies of my chequered life, that God gave me such a friend as Mr. Vasey. He knew me when the sun of prosperity shone upon my path, and he went with me down into the depths of sorrow, when the night of adversity overtook me, lightening my load, sharing my grief, never forsaking me, my constant adviser in every difficulty, my counsellor and guide; and this he was to the end of his life. His removal is to me a calamity and blank, which will never be filled up, till like him I find a place among the redeemed and sanctified in heaven. Beloved friend! Thou art not dead; thy memory can never die.

As a husband, he was one of the most tender and devoted to his amiable, loving, and afflicted wife. As a father, he trained his children in the fear of the Lord, and very blessed are the results of such training at this day. I think I shall not arrogate too much when I say no one in this circuit knew his social and domestic life better than myself. An example as husband, father and friend, which many might imitate with unspeakable advantage. I am not a believer in "spiritualism," so called, but I believe in the "communion of saints," and not alone with those who are in the body, but with those who have "crossed the flood;" and there have been times since his removal when my spirit has held sweet communion with his, and in a very remarkable manner he has been permitted by God to be a "ministering spirit" to me. My own pilgrimage is nearing the end, and I am looking at no very distant day to rejoin my loved and faithful friend in that "better land in heaven."

On the 26th of September, 1850, a second son was born to Mr. Vasey. It might well be conjectured that, in the midst of such an incessant and varied round of services, he would find little opportunity for the exercise of the domestic affections and duties. But the previous outline testifies that in this respect he was fully up to the mark. There was no trait in his character more striking than his power to adapt himself to all circumstances. In the special work of the ministry, the business of committees, or the details of home life, he was equally *au fait;* and such were his ideas of domestic comfort and convenience, that had his means been more ample, and the furnishing of his house depended upon himself, his ménage would in these respects have lacked nothing. In those busy years (his children being so young), his intercourse with them was confined almost exclusively to the hours for meals, but he contrived at, or after breakfast to secure some moments for a Bible story, and a few nursery songs, or a romp; and a merrier group could hardly be imagined than that presented, when "Dada" in dressing-gown took the circuit of the room on all fours, each child having a ride in its turn. But even in those days there were other sides to the domestic picture. The wife and mother had at Stamford Hill occasional attacks of severe illness, and the anxieties of the husband were excited. And Mr. Vasey himself again and again required the services of good Mr. Ingoldby, the kind medical attendant. Upon the whole, however, the three years spent at Stamford Hill, with all the drawbacks, was a period of much family happiness.

It is also clear from the antecedent testimony, that the duties of his circuit were not neglected. On the contrary, at Stoke Newington, and outlying places of which he had more particularly the oversight, though his pastoral visitation was neither fully satisfactory to himself nor his flock; it was wonderful how much he accomplished in this way, through the careful use of moments. He also conducted a young ladies' Bible-class at Stoke Newington, generally secured an hour at the ladies' dorcas

meetings, and would occasionally join the social circle. And, during his abode there, a new and large chapel being thought necessary, he devoted both time and energy, in union with the members of that society, to raise the needed funds, and to the requisite details of building, the result being a beautiful and commodious house of God, which, not being completed when he left the circuit, at the desire of the people he returned and preached in it the first sermon.

The Rev. B. Gregory says :—" Being in neighbouring circuits, I saw a good deal of Mr. Vasey during the term of his appointments to City-road and Islington, and at every interview, caught some new and unexpected phase of his large and noble nature—his intense kindliness, his geniality, his manly tenderness to anyone in sickness, in difficulties, or under undue pressure of work; his passionate love of little children ; his keen enjoyment of a pleasantry at his own expense; his sober and moderate estimate of his own abilities; his eager appreciation of the gifts of his brethren; his utter incapacity of envy; his warm-heartedness, and his watchfulness, and self-restraint, lest his quick sensibilities should lead him astray."

The services of Mr. Vasey were also not unfrequently in demand for anniversary occasions; and in the Conference of 1850 he accompanied the president (the Rev. Dr. Beecham) to Cornwall on deputation work. On this occasion he took the opportunity to descend into some of the Cornish mines; and in association with his fellow travellers, and the enjoyment of the hospitalities of the Cornish people, he derived both refreshment and pleasure.

We instance the case of the Rev. Thomas Champness, kindly furnished by himself, as one proof among many that Mr. Vasey's extra parochial services were not unfruitful of striking results.

Mr. Champness writes : "I always feel I was called to work among the heathen whilst listening to one, and, indeed, the only one of Mr. Vasey's sermons I was privileged to hear. The date I do not remember, but it was in Great Bridgewater Chapel, Manchester. The

text was, 'All flesh is grass,' &c. The subject was the eternity and durability of God's Word, as compared with the frailty of the messenger. Well do I remember it, and shall do so to life's end. In one part of his subject, the preacher dwelt upon Sierra Leone—the sickliness of the climate and the mortality among the missionaries, and spoke of there being at times only one left, and yet that one lifting up his voice to preach the word of grace; and dwelling upon the fact that, however deadly the clime, there was always some one to go and brave Death in his own domain. These heart-stirring words fired my zeal, and I did not rest until accepted for the very post which Mr. Vasey had so eloquently described, and, what was stranger than all, I was privileged to labour in a colony of Sierra Leone where an epidemic had swept nearly the whole of the Europeans to an early tomb. All our English missionaries and wives had either died or had to leave for home, and two of them had died on the voyage. I was spared to tell the tale, but it seemed as though the preacher in Bridgewater-street had been gifted with a seer's foresight."

The annexed letter has been received from a highly valued Local Preacher (who enjoyed Mr. Vasey's ministry during his sojourn in the Eighth London Circuit, and afterwards for three years in Hull), in response to a request to be favoured with a "*critique*" on Mr. Vasey as a preacher. The sketch, besides containing the writer's own impressions, includes much deeply interesting and valuable information in reference to Mr. Vasey's London labours, and also supplies a beautiful illustration of the sympathy and tenderness of his nature, and of his intense solicitude and self-devotion at the bedside of the sick and dying.

47, Lonsdale Square, London.

MY DEAR MRS. VASEY,

I WAS a great admirer of Mr. Vasey, and, indeed, everyone who admired beauty of thought, chasteness of language, force of illustration, with a natural, and at times impassioned delivery, was sure to be an admirer of Mr. Vasey. Nevertheless, I feel how unable I am to give you an analysis of him as a preacher, fit for the public eye.

As a minister of the Gospel in the *true sense of the word*, and not as a mere pulpit man, he stood pre-eminently high. The moment he appeared, one saw that he felt the solemnity of his position and the responsibilities of his office. His manner was grave, devout, and earnest. His prayers were not the mere coinage of the brain, which came glibly from the tongue, but the warm effusions of the heart; and on many occasions they were remarkable specimens of earnest, powerful pleading with God. We felt, as he proceeded step by step in his pleadings, leading us nearer and nearer to the Throne, that he himself was in close contact with God, and was prevailing.

His Sabbath morning's prayer before the sermon was eminently of this type, and there are many who can never forget those times of power with God, and those seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. It was so "good to be there" that we rose from our knees willing at once to leave the chapel, lest any future part of the service should diminish the heavenly influence.

His sermons were well thought out, clearly arranged, and beautifully illustrated. But the great charm thrown around them was the warmth and naturalness which characterised them. They were not the dry and laboured composition of the study, read from memory in a perfunctory and mechanical manner, without power or unction, but the warm out-gushings of his heart; and hence we felt that we were in contact with a man who was giving us, not the result of some mental speculations, but the deep convictions of his soul. And it was this, I repeat, which threw such a charm around his ministry, and made his appeals all but irresistible.

Mr. Vasey never affected the recondite, and he was above the temptation of a carefully prepared, ornate style. His aim in the pulpit was evidently practical. His object was to reach the heart, and every other consideration was of secondary importance. And all who watched the progress of his life have seen how eminently God blessed his efforts. Every circuit in which he travelled can contribute its quota of evidence on this head, and the revival in Newcastle, which was the culminating glory of his life, can never be forgotten.

No written description, no manuscript copy, no, nor even a verbatim copy of the sermon delivered, could convey an accurate idea of Mr. Vasey as a preacher. You want the man, the living man—the manner—the tone of voice—the tender appeal—the earnest entreaty and the many witching ways of real affection by which he commended the truth to every man's conscience. He was a "master in Israel."

On the platform Mr. Vasey was always happy and always at home, and it would be difficult to say whether in the pulpit or on the platform his talents appeared to the most advantage.

He was confessedly one of the best extemporaneous speakers in the Connexion, and hence his power in debate. I have frequently heard him rise in reply, and deliver a speech so closely reasoned, so appropriately illustrated, and in language so well chosen and chaste, that had we not known that as a speech in reply it must necessarily be impromptu, we might have supposed it had been carefully prepared and revised in his study, and then committed to memory.

He had a wonderful command of language, always so appropriate

and expressive of his ideas, and always so chaste. The words came from his tongue clear as crystal, and sweet as the music of a silver bell.

Then he had great self-possession, and power of abstraction in a distinguished degree. He could pursue a train of thought amid all the excitement and distraction of a platform. He could do this also, and he was in the habit of doing it, as he walked along the crowded streets. Hence he often met you and did not see you. Nay, however strange it may appear, he had the power of thinking out a subject in the pulpit. I have heard him preach sermons of this kind, and although they were below the average, yet they were wonderful specimens of self-possession and calm thought.

He once told me how he acquired that power. When, he said, he first entered the ministry he was a memoriter preacher. This he found complete slavery, and resolved to free himself from such a yoke. He therefore determined to break off the habit gradually, by leaving in certain portions of his manuscript sermon an *hiatus* to be filled up on the inspiration of the moment. "But," said he, "when I came to the *hiatus* I was like a locomotive engine coming into the station; I began to slacken speed, until I came to a dead stand." This he found to be so unsatisfactory that he was obliged to give up the attempt, and so he continued to drag his chain till he came to London, when he was made Secretary to the Committee of Privileges. During that time the Reform movement took place. Great numbers of chapels in every part of the country which had not been settled on the Conference Plan, and the majority of whose trustees became tainted with Reform principles, were closed against the Conference. The only redress the minority of trustees had, was to write to the Committee of Privileges for instructions. Mr. Vasey, as Secretary, received twenty or thirty such letters daily, and as soon as breakfast was over he had to leave home at Stamford-hill for the City, to consult solicitors and take counsel's opinion on the various legal points in dispute. He was thus occupied day after day, and did not get home to dinner till seven or eight o'clock in the evening. After dinner he had to write his replies, and, wrapping a wet towel round his head, he regularly worked till two or three o'clock in the morning. And I may here remark, the Connexion will never know how much it is indebted to Mr. Vasey for these arduous labours, so persistently and patiently continued, unseen and unknown by the public, without fee or reward.

These incessant engagements, he told me, left him no time either to write sermons or commit them to memory. He was driven to simple mental preparation, leaving phraseology to the inspiration of the moment; "And often," said he, "have I gone into your pulpit (for I was then residing at Islington), when I have had Dr. Bunting, Dr. Beecham, and Dr. Hoole in the congregation, and I did not know a word I was going to say; I had not a sentence prepared." I heard some of these sermons, and although they were not equal to his later efforts, they were wonderful displays of power.

"Many a sermon," said he, "have I made in a cab or an omnibus, when riding about the city to see lawyers, and many have I made in the lobby of the House of Commons, while waiting to see members."

Now a man who can think out a sermon in such distracting situations must have the power of abstraction in a high degree.

It was thus he was emancipated from the slavery of memoriter preaching, and became Thomas Vasey the free-man. It was this emancipation that conferred upon him a mighty power for good, and I believe we shall never know in this world the blessings resulting to the Church from this liberation.

He told me he seldom prepared a speech for the platform. He left himself perfectly free. Some fact, some incident, or some thought would be suggested by the report of the chairman, which gave rise to a train of thought, "and if nothing else offers," said he, "I make a meal of the previous speaker."

The moment he rose on the platform, his face was all aglow with smiles—beaming with good nature and kindness; and before he opened his lips, your heart was knit to the man as a friend and brother. His genial good nature seemed to breathe in every sentence, for they were not so much the preparation of his intellect, as the offspring of his heart. His humour and wit seemed inexhaustible.

As a friend he was warm and constant, and as a sympathiser with the sufferer I have seldom, if ever, met with his equal. His fine and tender feelings prepared him to enter into every case of distress, and to sympathise with every case of suffering. Very many might be adduced, but I will name one which came under my own observation. At the September quarterly meeting of the Hull West Circuit in 1853, a message was brought to me from a dying man, a friend of mine, who had been a member of society many years, but did not enjoy religion. He was greatly concerned about his soul, and requested I would send one of the ministers to see him immediately. I spoke to Mr. Vasey, who asked the Superintendent's leave to go. It was a very important quarterly meeting, and the Superintendent was very reluctant to allow him to do so. He, however, went for a short time, and then returned to the meeting. After the meeting he went to the house of the sick man, and stayed till six o'clock in the morning. He talked to him, and pointed him to Jesus, until he was exhausted. Mr. Vasey then retired to the drawing room, where there was a fire, laid himself down on the rug, and got a short nap. He then returned to the sick room, and again prayed with the man and pointed him to Christ. And so he continued throughout the night, until the poor dying man was enabled to take Christ as his Saviour. I had this information from the wife of the dying man, who said she never could forget the great kindness of Mr. Vasey, for, she said, once in the night she felt very faint, but could not leave the bedside of her husband, and Mr. Vasey actually put on the kettle and made her a cup of tea. At six o'clock in the morning he went home, and at nine I met him starting on a long journey to preach some missionary sermons. Now, this single circumstance is worth a thousand assertions. Here is an act of kindness, prompted by a deep sympathy for the dying man, and an *earnest desire for his salvation*, performed comparatively unseen and unknown, and under circumstances from which a hundred other men would have shrunk.

He felt convinced, he said to me, that the man could not live till morning, and he could not leave him till he had found peace with

God. Is it any wonder, then, that a man of such tender feeling and deep sympathy; a man who could perform such heroic acts of kindness as this; who could sacrifice his own personal and domestic comforts, and his night's rest, and that in the prospect of a hard day's work, for the sake of trying to save a man's soul,—is it any wonder that he should be loved. The wonder would be were it otherwise.

Oh, that we had hundreds like him in the Christian Church!

I am, dear Mrs. Vasey,

Yours very truly,

M. HARGREAVES.

The following valuable testimony contributed by the Rev. Charles Prest, alludes more particularly to Mr. Vasey's Connexional services. For further particulars we refer the reader to a letter by the Rev. Dr. Rigg, in the Appendix:—

"Mr. Vasey was officially associated with me for several years, during some of our most exciting Parliamentary struggles: namely, the question of National Education, &c. We were in almost daily intercourse in a great variety of circumstances; and often in those when our necessary immediate action involved serious responsibility. Our labour, at that time, was intense; it was continued day and night, and was exhausting; as, in addition to our public official engagements, we had not any help in the ordinary routine of our circuit work. This was a tax which, in future, should not be imposed upon any man who may be occupied with such specific work for the Connexion.

"In all this Mr. Vasey maintained the supremacy of his godliness and the force of his ministry, though, with some of his co-workers, he suffered in his health. He had an ardent, impulsive spirit. His perception was remarkably quick, and his judgment was usually correct. In varied interviews with Peers and with Members of the House of Commons, and also in committees composed of ministers and members of other Churches, and of widely differing political opinions, he maintained his position with great propriety, and with others, was well able to vindicate the action of the Wesleyans in relation to pending national legislation. His speeches, at this time, in public meetings of an unusually exciting char-

acter, were able and eloquent, and while they powerfully stirred the emotions, they informed the judgment of the multitudes which heard them.

"As one of the Secretaries of the Committee of Privileges, he showed much ability, readiness, and adaptation to his work, and did valuable service to the Connexion. I never had a more efficient colleague in the business of that Committee.

"I confine my remarks to this period of Mr. Vasey's life, while I cherish gratifying recollections of his personal character; of his manly and honourable conduct; of his unusually faithful, powerful, and successful ministry; his courage and fortitude under the pressure of varied and painful afflictions; and of his triumphant death. He 'rests from his labours, and his works follow him.'"

Mr. Vasey's Connexional toils came to a close at the Conference of 1851. And we think that whatever may be said (and with some reason) against the employment of circuit ministers for Connexional services, few can fail to conclude, that in accepting his official appointments, Mr. Vasey only fulfilled the designs of Providence regarding himself. Indeed, his previous training seems to have contributed to fit him for the diversified activities of his London life. Only a man of his resources of mind and heart could have accomplished such labours with the like results. Certainly the testimonies of friends do not exaggerate these labours. In truth, as Mr. Vasey never talked of his doings, only they of his own household were fully aware of the extent of his services, and the sacrifices which they involved to himself and those near to him.

It cannot either be doubted that Mr. Vasey in leaving London, did so with increased qualifications for usefulness in the vineyard of his Master. And so he proceeded year after year, until he became at length, "mighty in deed and word before God and all the people."

CHAPTER VII.

HULL WEST.

According to Conference appointment, Mr. Vasey removed to Hull the first week in September, 1851. He had been invited previously to labour in the Waltham-street Circuit; and with his family received a cordial and comfortable reception.

It afforded him great delight to be at liberty to devote himself fully to circuit labours, untrammelled by other duties. He had never shrunk from the service imposed upon him, *virtute officii* in his London life; and had discharged it diligently and efficiently, though to the detriment of his health. But his pleasure was in the work to which he had consecrated all his energies. Now he was like a child enjoying a holiday. Never was there a truer minister at heart than Thomas Vasey. None of the work of the pastorate was irksome to him. In the pulpit—on the platform—in prayer, class, and band meetings—in visiting rich or poor—at the bedside of the sick or dying, he was always at home, useful and happy. And in no circuit, during the whole of his ministerial life, did he fall more readily into the duties of his vocation, than at Hull West. Throughout the congregations there was a large number of intelligent and earnest hearers; and amongst the members he found much congenial society. With his colleagues, too, the Revs. W. W. Stamp and George Dickenson, he was happily associated. They had not entered upon their new sphere of labour under the most favourable auspices. The "agitation" which had worked so much ruin in other circuits, had not left Hull scatheless. The numbers in Society

had decreased, and there still prevailed a degree of disquietude. Nevertheless, under the judicious management of the Superintendent, with whom Mr. Vasey united faithfully and heartily in carrying out schemes for the welfare of the circuit, matters worked smoothly, and gradually a more prosperous and happy condition of affairs was attained.

To secure systematic pastoral visitation, the circuit was separated into three districts, of which each minister took one. Mr. Vasey's district mostly comprised the residences of the poorer portion of the members and hearers. These he diligently visited, and many for the first time were favoured with a pastoral call. The entries in his pocket-book show that on some occasions he saw as many as fourteen families in a day. Many of them he found engaged in their ordinary avocations; not unfrequently the female members of the household were busy at the washing tub. Without interrupting their employment, he would engage them in conversation about their temporal interests, and their eternal prospects, and after prayer, would leave them cheered and profited.

On January 5th, 1852, Mr. Vasey's third son, Samuel Monkhouse, was born. From his birth he was very frail, and a great sufferer, but remarkably patient, and in his brief life endeared himself greatly to his parents. After much careful tending, he was taken to the heavenly fold July 20th. This was the first breach made by death in the family group; and the tender, fatherly heart of Mr. Vasey was sorely tried. He was, however, enabled, with his wife on his arm, to read the burial service, and to commit the remains of his child to their last resting place, in the vault of his friend, Mr. Hardy, beneath Waltham-street Chapel. Since the demise of his father and brother, Mr. Vasey had not lost a near relative, and the death of his own child deeply affected him. The entrance of the spoiler into his happy home brought to his mind in full force the effect of the fall. His loathing for sin, which had introduced such a curse into the world, seemed intensified. But, on the other hand, he realized

in a much higher degree than ever before, the preciousness of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body as set forth in its fullness of assurance and consolation in Hosea xiii. 14, "I will ransom from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death; O death I will be thy plagues."

The effect of this trial was also to increase the nervous exhaustion from which Mr. Vasey had suffered in a greater or less degree, ever since he had borne the fearful weight of his London toils and anxieties. Nevertheless he continued to labour without reserve, and was ready for "every good word and work." In addition to his ordinary routine of duties, which included a ladies' Bible class, he was prompt to engage heart and soul in special revival meetings, or, lured by the prospect of more extended usefulness, he would respond to applications for pulpit or platform service, either coming from neighbouring or more distant places. Neither did he hesitate to use his talents in promoting the welfare of other communities of Christians, and for this end would occasionally exchange pulpits with his brethren of other denominations. He also, when weather permitted, and he had opportunity, held out-door services, and on more than one occasion, preached in the chapel of the Rev. Newman Hall for sailors, in whom, as a class, he was deeply interested, never omitting prayers for them in public or family worship. And, though it was not his habit to seize upon every passing event for sensational preaching, he was ever at hand to improve any loss or public calamity of national or local importance. Hence, he preached on the death of the Duke of Wellington, from the text, "Put not your trust in princes" (Psalm cxlvi. 3). The sermon abounded in instructive and original thought, and was esteemed a masterly production. Mr. Vasey was requested to print it, but declined to do so. Indeed, though he had such great facility in composition, beyond publishing a tract suited to the Wesleyan times, entitled, "Hope for a bleeding Church," and occasionally writing a leading article for

the Wesleyan papers, he never wrote for the Press. He did not desire the fame of an author, and considered that as long as he belonged to the itinerancy, his duty to his circuit forbade his using his time and talents in preparations for publication. It was his purpose, however, to use his pen in the service of his Master, if he lived long as a supernumerary.

As a visitation exciting universal horror and sympathy, Mr. Vasey also improved the Holmfirth catastrophe, taking for his text the words, "Thou carriest them away as with a flood," and made a collection in aid of the sufferers through that fearful calamity.

In Hull he frequently met in friendly union clergymen and dissenting ministers, and as a member of the Protestant Association, and in delivering lectures on behalf of various institutions, &c., he did good service to the cause of truth and progress in the town.

At length, however, his state of nervous depression became more distressing and alarming. The suffering in the head was so great as to prevent the possibility of further effort in preaching; and his medical advisers prescribed entire rest and change. Through the kindness of several friends in Hull West, he was enabled to undertake a voyage to Russia on board *The Lion* commanded by his generous friend, Capt. J. Kruger, having for his companions Mr. J. H. Atkinson and Mr. Carlton, a relative. Some selected extracts from a journal kept during his voyage and visit to St. Petersburg, cannot fail to interest the reader.

Tuesday morning, May 10th, 1853.—I sailed out of Hull half-past seven; wind N.E.; snow lying on the Lincolnshire hills; strong sea on; very cold; kept the deck till half-past twelve at noon; grew very ill; went to bed at 2 p.m.; dinner at four; unable to get up.

Wednesday morning.—Up at 7 a.m.; hove the log, ascertained ship's progress, 15 miles; traced it on the chart, found we were on the Dogger Bank, where of old the Dutch and English fleets fought for the mastery of the seas.

Thursday morning, May 12th.—Bright and fine; enjoyed a few chapters in the Bible, reading the minor prophets and Epistle to the Romans (began yesterday), much struck with the powerful imagery of Hosea, representing Jehovah as a jealous God; want to keep right

on this point; mean to try chiefly during this voyage to improve in personal religion; feel helpless, but have great comfort in the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Breakfasted; pretty full muster of passengers. At 10 a.m. made the coast of Denmark, and discontinued the log, land at a distance of fifteen miles; lounged on the cushions on a level with the open ports in saloon; water sparkling and dancing in the sun, every now and then turning up a white lip to kiss the sunbeams. Longed for a telegraphic communication with my wife, to tell her how happy I am; pictured a submarine telegraph wire, with a floating station in the middle of the North Sea. Contented myself with talking to the captain about it. Skirted the coast of Jutland at a distance of about 8 to 12 miles, occasionally within 3 miles. Appearance of the country bleak; straggling cottages all along, with an occasional hamlet and plain awkward looking church, with whitewashed tower and red body. Upon the whole, it looked like a country from which might issue those piratical bands who infested the coasts of England in their black ships.

Friday morning, May 13th.—Vessel's course due south; saw land on the Swedish and Danish coasts; passed several vessels; looked out for the *Emperor*, but not to be seen; hope to get in before him to Copenhagen and secure the passengers; looking out for the steamer from Copenhagen, want to put a Swedish gentleman on board.

Friday, May 13th.—Arrived at Copenhagen 4 p.m. Danish fleet lying within the mole; defences on the sea side very strong; formidable batteries, mounting heavy guns, and completely raking the harbour. By the fire of these batteries, which resisted all the attempts of the British fleet to take them, Nelson was obliged to sheer off and to land troops and guns at the back of the city, from which point, after a terrible bombardment, he attacked and finally carried the place. Copenhagen is built on an island, perfectly flat, and very cold; streets straight, houses high, great cleanliness everywhere, population 120 to 130,000, physiognomy very pleasing; sensible, good natured, expressive of energy and determination. Two palaces, neither of them at all attractive. Several good churches, mostly of the Byzantine order. Visited the principal church; at the end, in the communion space, a colossal figure of Christ in marble, with the inscription in Danish, "Come unto Me." At the sides large figures of the twelve Apostles in marble.

Visited the Museum of Sculpture by Thorwalsden; saw some good specimens of figure and posture. Walked along the promenade by the batteries, and re-embarked, after a very pleasant evening on shore.

Sunday morning, May 15th.—Sea as smooth as glass, looking as if it knew it was Sunday, and ought not to play; felt my mind in a tranquil frame and much disposed to gratitude and praise. Divine service at eleven in the best cabin; all the passengers, and about a dozen of the crew present; read prayers, and enjoyed them exceedingly; durst not venture upon singing, so preached from Acts ii. 1—4, had a good time myself, and the congregation very devout and attentive; went amongst the crew to converse with them, and distributed tracts—very well received. Chanted the *Te Deum*, first in the cabin, and secondly in

the ship's bows. Very happy, had many thoughts of home and Waltham-street. Pictured my little family group, and would have enjoyed just a real peep in at the parlour door; felt communion with the worshipping congregations of the saints on earth, and with the hosts celestial.

Dined at four, and after an interval of private devotion, ready for evening service at 6.30, more of the crew present than in the morning, and very serious; ventured upon singing the Evening Hymn tune; went off very satisfactorily; seemed much in harmony with the circumstances, and tried again two verses, "Come Holy Ghost;" very fair; preached from Ps. cxvi. 7; personal comfort not so good as in the morning, but able to put out a good deal of plain, earnest, useful truth. Felt thankful for this opportunity of influencing the minds, and it may be, the eternal destinies of those whom I may never meet again until the Day of Judgment. Paced the deck in the moonlight for an hour and a half in the most delightful feeling of serenity and peace.

Have been much pleased with the way in which the passengers have endeavoured to avoid everything which could be supposed to give pain to a religious mind in their conversation and conduct. At 11 p.m. entered the Gulf of Finland, and being now in the Russian waters must take care not to provoke the autocrat.

May 16th, Monday morning.—Saw the smoke of a steamer behind us, all on the *qui-vive* with glasses, &c.; turned out to be our rival the *Emperor;* came up fast behind us, and at nine passed us, with flag flying at her mast head, passengers and crew hailing; we not a little mortified.

Passed close to the Island of Orgoland, a high rock, bearded with wood, rising up to the height of 300 or 400 feet, right in the middle of the Gulf of Finland. The few inhabitants of it are reported to be not less stern and pitiless than the rock itself, principally living upon the plunder of wrecks. Ship being trimmed up, and passengers getting their luggage ready. Went to bed at one o'clock, Petersburgh time; had hardly got to sleep when the vessel stuck fast in a floe of ice, most of the passengers up, and commotion on deck; but after a stoppage of about twenty minutes found the ice soft enough to cut through it, and so went on for an hour or more grinding, bumping, and thumping, after which got into clear water.

Tuesday morning, May 17th.—Awoke, and found by the floating ice in the water, we were near Cronstadt. Came to a stand about eight o'clock, and were now boarded by custom house officers, who were busy sealing up the ship's papers; very thankful to find ourselves safe here within a week from starting. 11.40 a.m. embarked in the steamer for Petersburgh; passed on the right two palaces, one of them the favourite residence in summer of the present empress—the other the abode of the widow of Prince Michael. Began to perceive in the distance the gilded domes of the principal churches, and especially Isaac's Church, which is the loftiest in Petersburgh. At 4.45 came to the great city: flat, but imposing in its *coup d'œil*, from the number of public buildings facing the river, and the regularity and neatness of the streets; spacious quays on each side, a splendid cast-iron bridge of five or six arches spanning the Neva,

and resting upon granite piers; both stone and iron imported from England, the whole looking like the work of one man, and exhibiting an unity of design, such as only a will paramount could give it. Got our luggage examined; found comfortable quarters.

On arriving at St. Petersburgh, accompanying the log, the following little note, written on board ship, was sent to his wife. We give it in full as exhibiting his home-tenderness and happiness.

MY NOBLE, TENDER, LOVING GIRL.

I enclose my log, which will give you a view of my daily routine, and have only further to say that I want nothing to complete my comfort but you, and really as the weather has been since the first day, you would have enjoyed the voyage. I hope you did not get any cold by seeing us off, but have many fears on this head. Do take care of yourself, and above all do not work too hard.

You are seldom out of my thoughts by night or day, and it will be very pleasant when the ship's bow is turned towards you, for no attractions of novelty or pleasure at this end, can counterbalance the attraction of my wife and my home. You may expect, by God's blessing, to see me much improved in health. I hope quite better. I have had no unpleasant symptoms in my head, after the first day's horrid sickness. My two mates, Mr. Carlton and Mr. Atkinson, are very lively, and improving fast. I enclose a letter for Mrs. C., which may, perhaps, save you the trouble of writing to her. I send a kiss a-piece for the children on the other side, and my love to Lizzy. Mr. Atkinson has sent a humorous letter to the ladies of the sewing meeting, which you must see.

I have written to Mr. Stamp and Mr. Tenney, and shall write again from St. Petersburgh, D.V., where I hope we shall be in good time, as the reports of the breaking up of the ice are favourable. Now, my darling, take my whole heart's love to yourself, and believe me,

Your devoted

TOM.

We resume the daily records:—

Tuesday afternoon, May 17th.—Went to the Church of the Cherabin Guards, erected in honour of the annunciation of the Virgin Mary, and for the use of the said guards; gilded domes and minarets; porphyry pillars; crowded to the top of the dome with pictures, of what degree of merit it is impossible to say, as they are, for the most part, covered with tinsel and lacquered metal, leaving only the hands and feet exposed.

Went to the Riding School, a large covered building, where a whole regiment might exercise, and warmed thoroughly by stoves. Visited the Rugan, or Cathedral Church; large colonnade of pillars in front, in form of a crescent, horns pointing; otherwise Byzantine; richly decorated large silver candelabra, ten or twelve feet high, and

massive silver balustrades supporting and in front of the altar,—all contributed by the Cossacks of the Russian army after the defeat of the French. Banners taken from the French and Poles hanging in tatters from the pillars—massive pillars of porphyry in one piece, resting in brass sockets; tomb of Prince Poniatowski; keys of cities taken; floors of granite and marble mixed; immense numbers of pictures and votive offerings. Being in time for vespers stayed the greater part of the service, conducted in the Sclavonic dialect, not well understood by the common people; the intoning very good, but no reverential manners, either in the officiating priests or worshippers, who continued their crossings and genuflexions without taking the least interest in the service; saw a mother with a baby going round kissing the pictures herself, and holding her baby's mouth close to them. People of all ranks seem to unite in the picture and saint worship, and it is truly painful to see them in the churches crossing themselves, bowing, and then kneeling down till their foreheads touch the floor. Even in the streets many of them seldom pass a church without taking off their hats, bowing, and crossing; and the drosky-men throw their reins together and cross while they are driving. Upon the whole, the religious character of the Greek Church appears very low; the instruction of the people is neglected; very few of the churches have pulpits; whilst invocation of saints, superstitious regard to their relics, prayers for the dead, and sacramental efficacy *enopem operati*, are the prevalent features in their religious ritual. As a proof of this, we were informed, that children receive the Lord's supper from being one year old.

Went with Captain Kruger to call upon Mr. Ellerby, minister of the British and American Chapel, found him ill in bed, offered to help him on Sunday, and felt pleased to do what was of real and important service to a sick brother. Saw the chapel, a very neat and commodious place, capable of seating 500 or 600 people, with a good organ.

Went with Captain Kruger to call upon the American consul; found him in a large house which, like many here, is let in flats; he occupied the uppermost, containing twenty-three rooms, most of them very large and lofty. Had a very hospitable reception; found a party of gentlemen and ladies trying their hands at table turning by the magnetic circle—had not succeeded and gave it up; heard some superior music and singing from Mrs. Roper, the consul's wife; got home tired.

Had my first experiment of drosky riding,—queer looking little things, low wheels, scarcely any sitting accommodation; drivers in a very neat uniform, consisting of long blue cloak, fastened round the middle by a cord, with low overhanging hats.

Wednesday morning.—Up, and set out for the Corps Institution. This is a complete establishment for the training of young men to superintend and conduct the mining operations of the whole empire. It also serves as a repository for geological charts, specimens of fossils and minerals, models of machinery, and specimens of manufactured goods. It gave us a good idea of the vast resources of the empire; of its very rapid progress in the arts of civilised life, and of the energy and skill thrown into all the departments of the State, by this con-

centration of the whole manufacturing and producing resources of the capital. In this respect, the autocratic form of government supplies partly the want of that internal communication which freedom of trade, good roads, and liberal institutions, secured to England.

Went to dine at Mr. Merrilees', one of the deacons at the British and American Chapel, who with his brother deacon had called upon me in the morning to invite me formally to officiate on the Sunday; got a good deal of information about the habits, manners, and religion of the people, though there is an evident disinclination to discuss either the religion or the government, for fear of unpleasant consequences. For the purpose of showing me the customs of the country, the wet nurse was introduced with her baby; she had a beautiful round hat, with gold lace and silver flowers, a blue tunic without sleeves, and gold embroidered stripes down the front, and a neat shirt drawn in front and opening out into enormous bishop's sleeves down to the elbows; this is the characteristic of the caste of wet nurses in the first families, and the dry nurses are distinguished from them by a slight difference in costume; they are always worn in the streets, and taken home with them when the period of service expires.

Thursday morning, May 19th.—Went to Mr. Ellerby's, and through him obtained an introduction to Mrs. Hughes, the English nurse of the Imperial family, who took us over the magnificent palace of the Czar; kindly taking us into many apartments where strangers cannot get admission, her influence being greater than that of any official to whom we could gain access. She is evidently much attached to the Emperor and his family, of whom she spoke in the most enthusiastic terms, and we were much delighted to learn that the virtues and affections of domestic life are so strongly exemplified in the man who wields absolute sway over so great an empire; the best guarantee that his subjects could have for the mild and paternal character of his administration. Here we walked upwards of three hours amid scenes of splendour which surely can have no equal in the world; but which by no means represent adequately the wealth and luxury which this empire contributes to its lords. In the midst of this splendour the personal habits of the Imperial household, and especially of the princes, are most simple, natural, and such as to fit them for business and duty. The Emperor himself probably works as hard as any prime minister of the crown, and is *au fait* at everything. Perhaps, next to Peter the Great, he has done more for the empire than any other monarch. All the beds hard; and the dining table of the two young princes a plain old fashioned mahogany, with cane-bottomed chairs and no cushions. Was much pleased with the nursery department, which is also presided over by an English lady. The principal objects of interest were, the ambassadors' staircase; empress' reception room; gallery of portraits, comprising all the notables, naval, military, and civilians, full length portrait of Wellington, historical pictures of immense size representing the principal sieges, battles and sea fights in Russian history, gold shields and other massive pieces of plate presented to the Imperial family; beautiful conservatory, with fountains, where the Emperor and family breakfast amidst the reign of a Russian winter, surrounded by the flowers of summer's climes. The throne room; private chapel and state ditto; crown jewels;

bedroom, dressing and bath rooms of the Grand Duke and Duchess, with oratory; first bed of one of their children, preserved as a memento; their private rooms, with suits of armour worn successively from his boyhood by the Grand Duke. Suits of uniform for each of the Imperial family, resembling that of every regiment in the army, and worn on public occasions as needed. Bedroom, with children's playthings, guns, &c., lying in their very cradles; gymnastic room, with ships of war upon a large scale, every rope in which they were taught to throw, to name, and to handle, as well as to mount the rigging, ladders, poles, and fencing weapons.

Heartily tired went to lunch; then shopping and bargaining; dinner at six, and afterwards a quiet stroll in the neighbourhood. Almost every fifth person you meet is a soldier or a policeman; of this latter class there are some who have charge of the streets, and carry a long pole surmounted with a formidable axe, and others are mounted and scour the city, armed with lances. The postmen are on horseback, with uniform and armed. Everything in the palace and the streets gives you the idea of a government based upon military power, and capable of fearful aggressive action upon other nations.

Friday morning, May 20, 1853.—Went first thing to the secret police office to get our passports arranged, and leave to quit the country again; a tedious process, requiring I don't know how many papers—first the passport from England, then an acknowledgment that it was regular, then an account of our age, size, complexion, &c.; then a certificate from the British Consul of our nationality, and lastly, a paper from the police office stating that our debts were paid, then permission to depart. Went to the "Hermitage," saw Mrs. Hughes, who introduced us to the rooms, and sent a lacquey round with us with orders to show us everything. Saw the Romanoff Gallery of Portraits; went through the picture galleries, superbly furnished, and each room provided with proper eye glasses for viewing, arranged according to the various schools of Italy, France, Spain, and Flemish Flanders; side galleries decorated with fresco paintings, copied from the first classical designs of Greece and Rome. All the celebrated masters are here represented: Rubens, Titian, Raphael, Vandyke, Murillo, Rembrandt, Domenichino. The best painting in the lot, to my fancy, was, "Abraham offering up Isaac," by a Russian artist, which would have amply repaid a month's undivided study. Then came the statuary, as though instinct with life, and full of sentiment and passion; female figures, some real, some mythical; nymphs, graces, muses, Venuses, Cupids, Apollos, Mercurys, &c., &c. Thence to the Hall of Ancient Sculpture, where we saw authentic figures, and busts of Pompey, Augustus, Scipio, Cato, and a host of other classical names, both male and female. Those old Romans deserved to be masters of the world, and their women looked as if fitted to be masters of the men, with great massive heads and overhanging brows. Then came the huge, sober, contemplative, placid Egyptian figures with sphynxs, and sarcophage. Then the cabinet of ancient medals and manuscripts, including some MSS. of the Scriptures as early as the ninth century; closed with the gallery of Peter the Great . . . Finished here, and then crossed the Neva in a boat, and visited the fortress and church connected with it. The interest of the

latter place arises from its being the burial place of the Imperial family. . . . Peter the Great lies buried here. . . . Asked leave to ascend the pulpit, which was given to me as an English clergyman, but refused to the rest; upon which I ascended, and from it pronounced, in an audible voice, the words, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." . . . Dined at six, and at 8.30 went to take a Russian bath; a most fearful undertaking. . . .

Saturday morning, May 21st, 1853. . . . Called on Mr. Ellerby, found him very ill, and unable to take his work; felt very much for him, and the congregation; resolved to try to take it all for him, trusting to God to help me. Had some interesting conversation with him; he read me some extracts from the liturgy of the Greek Church, containing invocations of the Virgin Mary as the Saviour of the world, and of other saints as being intercessors and deliverers of men. . . . Came to my quarters, lunched and rested till three; looked out the hymns for the orchestra; went with Captain Kruger to dine at Mr. Prince's (brother-in-law to the American Consul); Mr. Roper's children came in, most lively, intelligent affectionate children, who chatted, sang Russian airs, talked sensibly, and loaded me with caresses, till I half imagined I was at home. Came in, and spent the rest of the evening in my apartments, preparing for my Sabbath work.

Sunday, May 22nd, 1853.—Preached for Mr. Ellerby in the British and American Chapel at eleven. Commodious place; organ and good orchestra; singing in good taste; congregation good and respectable; arrayed myself in gown and cassock, preached from Acts xix. 2; felt earnest and desirous to do the people good, they very attentive, and several affected. Came home; dined; went with Captain Kruger and Mr. Atkinson in a caleche to Alexandroski, six miles; shocking roads, repaired with branches of trees; wooden huts; cotton factories; men and women standing, sitting, lying, in front of their houses, and by the roadside—the picture of filth and spiritual destitution, my heart yearned towards them, and I would have liked to speak to them; but had I done so, or given them even a tract, should have been arrested and sent over the frontier. Arrived at Alexandroski, a large iron manufacturing concern; nice little chapel, decent congregation, about 100; preached from Heb. ix. 27, with some degree of faithfulness and point, wishing to improve, without alluding to it, the death of a Methodist local preacher, who had been an awful backslider, and been swiftly carried off by cholera a few days before; came out, got into the caleche, drove to St. Petersburgh, arrived at 6.30; robed, swallowed a hasty cup of tea, and went into service, preached from Romans v. 1; very happy; powerful influence from God; hope good was done. Saw my landlord there, who had been powerfully wrought upon in the morning, and had come to me in my bedroom, beseeching me to talk to him about his soul. Being in great distress of mind prayed with him; told him to come at night—he came into my room after I had got into bed, to thank me and to talk about religion. Felt very tired but very thankful and happy.

Monday, May 23rd, 1853.—Woke up refreshed and lively in spirits, not at all the worse for my work, and continued all the day cheerful and vigorous. Went in the morning to see Isaac's church, a most

stupendous structure, has been 50 years in building; built of marble, the dome of copper covered with pure gold; bells very large, one of them weighing 30 tons; immense pillars of polished granite in a single piece; some splendid pillars of malachite; paintings of immense size, representing scriptural subjects; round the dome at the base are immense balustrades of copper, surmounted by colossal figures. Went out and had a magnificent view of the city—a city of palaces and temples, with not one unsightly object in view, streets running broad and straight; the majestic Neva running through, and numerous canals intersecting the city; no smoke visible except dimly in the distant outskirts, and the streets alive with droskies and carriages of all sorts. Got back to dinner at eight, went out to Mr. Ellerby's, and with him to visit a Persian Prince, Miza Kasan Beg, who was converted from Mohammedanism by one of the Presbyterian missionaries in Astracan. He is a confirmed Christian, is engaged in translating the Scriptures; a great linguist; talks English tolerably well; gave me some interesting particulars of his conversion, and complained bitterly of not finding admission to any Christian Church in Petersburg: they made the door so narrow. He could not get into the English Church without confirmation, nor into the Independent Church of Mr. Ellerby without consent of his deacons, an order of the church which he would not submit to; nor would he admit the authority over him in spiritual matters of any but his minister. Found at Mr. Ellerby's three Easter eggs and an Imperial cambric handkerchief as a present from Mrs. Hughes to the children. . . .

Tuesday morning, May 24th, 1853.—Breakfasted with Mr. Roper's family; enjoyed the children again. . . . Saw a military funeral. . . . Settled all our accounts and packed all up ready for the morning. . . .

Wednesday morning, May 25th, 1853.—Went on board the steamboat for Cronstadt without any regret at 10, and moored alongside the "Lion" at half-past 12. . . . Dined at 6, and the wind being fresh the vessel pitched so that one after another of the passengers became thoughtful, looked dubious, and left the cabin with some precipitation. I stood it out bravely till I could make a decent retreat. . . . Forgot to say that we had a numerous attendance of friends to see us off, and many went down to Cronstadt to see us on board. . . . Got into a gloomy train of thought about the Greek Church, and the little real religion there was under the Christian name—fancied the world was going back. . . .

Saturday, May 28th, 1853.—. . . . Passed the island of Gottland, and saw a good many miles of the Swedish coast. . . . Towards night began to near Copenhagen, and hoped to land there before Sunday.

Sunday, May 29th, 1853.—. . . . Landed at half-past 10, and proceeded straight to the English Church—prayers read very earnestly and devoutly by Rev. Mr. Ellis, the chaplain to the English Embassy. . . . A most excellent sermon, evangelical, scriptural, faithful, but very short, the whole service over in an hour and a half. Felt much brotherly feeling towards the preacher. Returned on board at quarter to one, and found the ship under weigh—had scarcely got on board when a long thunder-storm set in—mounted my mackintosh, overalls, and sou'-wester, and walked the deck alone, enjoying the beauty of

the scene. . . . At 7 held service in the saloon, read prayers, and preached from "God is love"—enjoyed myself—wished particularly to be useful to a lady on board, who appears to be dying of consumption; prayed much for her; spent the evening after tea upon deck with some young men who had been very giddy all the voyage, but who sung serious hymns and psalms to us on deck till nearly 12. . . .

Tuesday, May 31st, 1853.—Up in good time, . . . water clear and green, sea-air very refreshing and bracing. Enjoyed everything very much, but most of all the thoughts of home.

Wednesday, June 1st, 1853.—Up at 5 o'clock, packed all up ready; looked out anxiously for land; sea rough, wind refreshing; sails all taken in; at 11 saw land, and at 2 entered the docks at Hull. Thanks be to God!

The subjoined are notes of impressions and reminiscences kindly supplied by Mr. H. J. Atkinson, Mr. Vasey's fellow voyager and friend.

"With reference to your request, that I should make any remarks I thought proper upon the voyage to Russia, I had the pleasure of making, in 1853, with the late Rev. Thomas Vasey, I wish to state that I have often since that time instanced his conduct during that trip, as a proof that he could not be restrained from doing all the good in his power, however contrary to medical advice, and prudent personal considerations, his actions might be. His voyage was undertaken by direction of his medical men, and in order that he might have perfect rest from his ordinary duties, and most especially from those of the pulpit. While we were on board the steamer, however, he preached to us with great fervency and acceptance. On our arrival at St. Petersburgh, there was a very generally expressed desire to hear him on the part of the congregation worshipping in the English and American chapel; and consequently he agreed to preach there on the morning of his first Sunday in Russia. This engagement rapidly expanded itself, and the result was that after preaching in the morning as arranged, he was conveyed in a carriage to a small chapel some few miles out of the city where he preached in the afternoon; and after snatching a little refreshment, was driven back to St. Petersburgh to preach again in the evening, at the chapel where he had officiated in the morning. I fear, this was a fair specimen

of the manner in which he declined to spare himself, when the work of his Master and the interests of perishing souls, seemed to call for his efforts, despite the weakness of the flesh. I know that his ministry on the day to which I refer was not without result. One case arising out of these services I particularly remember, where Mr. Vasey was called to visit an Englishman of advanced age, who had been for some time addicted to habits of intemperance, and who was awakened and literally 'roused by reason of the disquietude of his heart.' Hours of painstaking, spiritual counsel and prayer were devoted to this person, sometimes when Mr. Vasey was not in a fit state for further exertion, but ought for his health's sake to have been in bed.

"I may add further, though that is scarcely necessary, that he was always the minister, the man of God. He did not so throw off his sacred character when taking his recreation, as to make it impossible for those who were his fellow-passengers to suspect his vocation. On the contrary, they would quickly "perceive that a holy man of God" was in His Providence passing by them, and no doubt even in exerting influence of the sort, he has done much good.

"I knew him for very many years, and in looking back upon his life and ministry, the only regret I feel is that he did not consider it would be better to live and do good work for God and his fellow-men for a greater number of years; than by over-work even in the best of causes, to hasten the time of his departure from this world. But even while writing this, I feel rebuked; for who knows in what way the life and death of such a man will best affect the world? God alone can know, and as our late lamented minister and friend was 'truly His servant,' we must be satisfied not to look on second causes, but believe he was guided aright and did his Master's work as he was moved to do it by the Holy Spirit.

"May the example of such a life, followed by such a death, lead many to follow him as he followed Christ!

"*Hessle, October*, 1872."

Whilst abroad "Mr. Vasey had kept both eyes and ears open, and he returned home with broad statesmanly views of the future of Russia and Turkey," and subsequently he embodied the result of his observations in two lectures, the one entitled "St. Petersburgh, Russia, and the Greek Church;" and the other "Russia and the War."

The improvement effected in his health by the voyage was marvellous; every threatening symptom had disappeared, and he resumed his circuit labours with zest and thankfulness. The pleasure of the change of scene, had been greatly heightened by the new opportunities it had afforded him of doing good. The full results of his efforts in the service of his Master, on shipboard and at St. Petersburg, the great day only will declare. He was, however, cheered by receiving some direct testimonies to his usefulness. The following letter from a lady, who heard him preach and was introduced to him at St. Petersburg, is to this effect:—

"*St. Petersburg, May 24th,* 1853.

"'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth.'—Isaiah lii. 7.

"'As for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put into thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.'—Isaiah lix. 21.

"'And this My word that goeth forth out of my mouth shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.'—Isaiah lv. 11. Inviting, encouraging, and constraining poor naked, hungry, thirsty, weary, and perishing souls: 'Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price.'

"Dear man of God and messenger of peace! may the Lord your God and my God and Shepherd graciously and abundantly fulfil these promises, everywhere and everytime when you are called to preach His holy Word; following it with His blessing to the benefit of many; many such poor, miserable creatures like the writer of these lines, to whom your excellent evening sermon proved like cooling dew on a parched ground, operating ever since like a slowly, but please God, completely healing balm upon my wounded soul; ruminating the heavenly tidings and irresistibly convincing truths, with unspeakable delight. Ah, that it was only to part again, we made your acquaintance! But if this be the Lord's will, we dare not, will not repine, but thank Him for the precious Sabbath-day as a foretaste of heaven. Having had, at least, the privilege of your personal acquaintance (though it was, alas, but a momentary one), I will recognize you certainly again when we meet in our Father's house, where there are so many mansions, and then we'll part never more! Till then your person will be engraven on my memory; your words and admonitions on my heart; and your name for ever included in my poor prayers. Whereas, I for my part hope and beg for a place in your kind and sympathizing intercession, that the Holy Spirit may soon assure me of my part in the Redeemer's blood, 'And bear His witness to my heart that I am born of God.' With these feelings, I remain for ever, reverend sir,—Your truly sincere and affectionate friend and sister in Christ. . . ."

On August 12th, Mr. Vasey's heart was gladdened by the birth of a second daughter. Afterwards succeeded much domestic solicitude—first, through the serious illness of the babe, and subsequently by the dangerously enfeebled condition of the mother. It was, however, the will of God, that both should survive, and the household band were mercifully spared any further breach by death for some years.

He had now entered upon his third year in Hull West;

still happy amongst the people, and rejoicing in every opportunity of usefulness. And throughout it, he continued to do the work of an Evangelist, unremittingly and unsparingly.

With his conceptions of ministerial and individual responsibilities, he was not content merely to pursue "the even tenor of his way," in the fulfilment of his ordinary circuit duties. That he might as a minister of Christ and a "steward of the mysteries of God be found faithful," he felt called upon to utter his protest against prevailing errors, and to pronounce his verdict on public and national questions. In accordance with these views, in December, 1853, he delivered a lecture in the new school-room, Waltham-street, subject, "Methodism in its Antagonism to Popery," in which he first expressed his serious views on the Papal aggression, and his fears in prospective; and then proceeded to show that whilst Wesleyan Methodism maintained, in common with other evangelical Protestant communions, a position of essential antagonism to the Church of Rome, it has certain peculiar adaptations of its own, which pre-eminently qualify it to counteract the influence, and to check the spread of Popery throughout the world. And lastly, he essayed to move and stimulate them to individual and united effort against this foe of all religious light and liberty.

If our space would permit, we would gladly insert the lecture verbatim, as calculated to startle into action those who, in these critical and perilous times, are shutting their eyes, and dreaming of security, whilst Protestantism is menaced on every hand. But probably it may be published in a separate form.

Nor was it on Wesleyan ground alone that Mr. Vasey stood forth as the champion of Protestantism at Hull. In the Town Hall, side by side with Gavazzi, as a faithful watchman, he blew the trumpet of warning loudly and fearlessly. Unhappily the lapse of time has not proved these notes of alarm to have been unnecessary. And surely now, when Protestantism has not only ceased to

be an aggressive power, but cannot be said to hold her own against the invasions of Popery, these blasts of warning should be sounded forth in ever deepening and prolonged tones by every man of position and influence, and should find their echo in the heart and action of every Protestant Englishman!

In May, 1854, Mr. Vasey went up to London by request, to assist at the Wesleyan Missionary Anniversary Services. The following extract from a letter to his wife, expresses his pleasure in meeting with old friends &c.:—

Stamford Hill, 3rd May, 1854.

. . . . . I have not much to report as to my proceedings yesterday, but I was very profitably employed, and had upon the whole a good religious day. Went up on purpose to call upon Mrs. Hopewell, whom I found in a very forlorn condition; but was highly pleased with her spiritual state and her general views, of which more when I see you. Spent my time very pleasantly with Mr. and Mrs. Bourne; Mr. Tom Pinder also looked in. After tea, paid Mr. and Mrs. Hazell a visit, and Mr. and Mrs. Nicoll, both places seasonably and I trust profitably. Went to the soirée, and enjoyed it very much; my reception everywhere has been most cordial and flattering. I never re-visited an old circuit with so much satisfaction. I cannot tell you all the people I spoke to, but on all hands received complimentary expressions both as to sermons and speeches. Mr. Arthur told me they had been talking of me as Superintendent of Irish Missions and Schools. I said to him that I believed my vocation at present is circuit duty, and I sincerely hope I may not be disturbed in this path. I have been very strangely and tenderly drawn to you, my darling, during this visit, especially while visiting our old habitations—wished very much to have had you with me at King-square yesterday; and I really contemplate having a week or ten days with you in London, if possible. I do think the air would be beneficial to you. I feel like a new man; all the excitement and work I have had, has not told upon me. I was quite as cool and calm in Exeter Hall as in Waltham-street Chapel, and suffered nothing from reaction. Yet I shall be very glad when my face is turned homewards again, for my wife and children have a strong hold upon my heart, and I cannot be either perfectly happy, or long content, to be separated from them.

The Rev. W. W. Stamp, Mr. Vasey's esteemed Superintendent, bears testimony, in the succeeding letter, to his usefulness, and touches upon several of the points which characterized his career in Hull:—

"My dear Mrs. Vasey,—It was my happiness to have your late devoted husband as one of my colleagues in

the Hull West (Waltham-street) Circuit, from the Conference of 1851 to that of 1854. Throughout the whole of that period, the well-known, and in some respects peculiar excellencies of his character were pleasingly developed. Yet, perhaps, at no period of his pastoral career, were his pulpit ministrations marked by such extraordinary mental developments, such clear and cogent elucidations of Divine truth, or such an evident unction from on high.

"From frequent conversations with him on the subject, I have been struck with the remarkable facility and readiness of thought evidenced in his preparations for the pulpit. His mind was indeed so largely imbued with Divine truth, and such his aptness in bringing out of his treasury 'things new and old,' that occasionally the meditations of an hour were all the preparations made for some of his most brilliant and successful pulpit efforts. Indeed, he has frequently assured me that he found it far easier to arrange his thoughts, and fix upon the most forcible modes of expression, moment by moment, when in the pulpit, than previously. A faculty this, not only peculiar in itself, and imparting a singular freshness to his utterances, but tending, it is to be feared by unduly taxing the mental and physical energies of the man, to abbreviate the term of ministerial labour. The intensity of his desire to be instrumental in the salvation of his hearers, was manifested in every sermon. As influenced by his subject, he was now a Boanerges, and anon, a son of consolation, but in all an apt and successful expositor of the written word.

"Many and remarkable results, as might be anticipated, followed his instructive and forcible appeals. One I well remember. The case of a female, who, from the pressure of painfully adverse circumstances, and under the almost overwhelming influence of satanic suggestion, had left her home fully bent on self-destruction. On passing by the Waltham-street Chapel during the hour of evening service, the thought providentially sprang up

within her heart that she would hear one more sermon ere precipitating herself into the presence of her Maker. Mr. Vasey was the preacher, and on that occasion was led to expatiate on the grievous temptations by which the followers of God were sometimes assailed; and to suggest suitable advice and counsel. Her own case was almost literally depicted. Light and consolation beamed on her disconsolate spirit, and she returned to her dreary home resolved to cast her care on God.

"In the discharge of pastoral duty, and especially in the visitation of the sick, Mr. Vasey was most exemplary, whilst in numerous instances, his genial spirit, his deep sympathy with the afflicted, the appropriateness of his counsels, and the earnestness of his pleadings at the Throne of Grace, caused him to be welcomed as an angel of God.

"From his incessant and exhaustive efforts in the discharge of ministerial duty, his physical as well as mental energies so far lost their elasticity and force, that entire rest for a season was rendered indispensable. Under the affectionate care of Captain J. Kruger, and with Mr. Henry J. Atkinson as his fellow voyager, he spent some time at Petersburg and the neighbourhood. Yet, though pledged to abstain from all ministerial effort whatever, his zeal was incapable of restraint, and both on ship-board and when in Russia, his pulpit and pastoral efforts almost equalled his exertions at home. Several striking instances of spiritual awakening and conversion were amongst the results of his ministry abroad.

"Respecting the character of your dear husband as a fellow helper and friend, as well as in all his domestic relations, I need not dwell, and can only express my earnest wish that as he followed Christ, we may be found treading in his steps.

"I am, my dear Mrs. Vasey,

"Yours very affectionately,

"WILLIAM W. STAMP.

"Sheffield, May 19, 1873."

The close of Mr. Vasey's ministry in Hull now drew nigh, and he contemplated with sorrow the removal from a circuit in which he had passed three happy and (in a good degree) prosperous years; this emotion was alike shared by minister and people, and was felt generally throughout the town. The members of Mr. Vasey's Bible class signified their esteem and appreciation of his services by the presentation of a gold watch, the following letter accompanying the gift:—

June 29th, 1854.

THE REV. T. VASEY,
Our beloved Minister.

We, the members of your Bible class, being sensible of the obligation under which we rest for the very affectionate, pleasing, and lucid manner in which your valuable Scriptural expositions have been imparted to us, unitedly request your acceptance of the accompanying watch, as a token of our appreciation and gratitude. Believing we shall each retain a lasting and lively remembrance of these hours of sacred privilege, we would earnestly pray that our subsequent life may testify, by the fruits of practical godliness, that the incorruptible seed of the Word has not been sown in vain.

Sincerely sorrowing that so soon a period must be put to our interviews, we trust that the Lord Jesus, who holds the stars in His right hand, will appoint your sphere of usefulness, and grant you abundantly all personal, domestic, and ministerial blessing.

We are, dear Mr. Vasey,
Your affectionate and obliged Friends and Pupils.

Here followed thirty-four signatures of ladies, of whom, and all his Hull friends, Mr. Vasey to the close of his life, cherished most affectionate remembrances.

This chapter will be appropriately terminated by recollections of Mr. Vasey's ministerial course in Hull, kindly gleaned by the Rev. H. W. Williams. He states:—

"The ministry of the late Rev. Thomas Vasey was exercised in the Hull West Circuit from the Conference of 1851 to that of 1854. That ministry is still vividly remembered as marked by intense earnestness, as well as by great vigour of thought and a clear and ample unfolding of truth. Very pleasing reminiscences are cherished by many of his genial bearing in the domestic and social circle. The young people of our families looked up to him with affection, and always

hailed his presence among them as their friend as well as pastor. At the commencement of his labours here, the waves of agitation which rolled over so many of the fairest districts of our Connexion had not subsided, and this tended to weaken the spiritual effect of his ministrations, and often caused him deep sorrow of heart. He was firm and faithful in maintaining the essential principles of our discipline, but he longed specially to see the gathering of souls to Christ. More than twenty years have elapsed since Mr. Vasey entered upon this circuit, and the recollections of his teaching are for the most part general. But all with whom I have conversed retain a vivid impression of that feature of his ministry which became still more prominent as years rolled on,—his absorbing desire to arouse men from their dreams of worldliness, and to lead them to Christ for present and conscious salvation.

"I may add the substance of the testimony borne by the widow of an esteemed minister, the Rev. John M. Pearson, who was resident in Hull during the whole of Mr. Vasey's labours here. She speaks in pleasing terms of the great benefit which she herself and several of her children derived from his ministrations. She describes these ministrations as very instructive and persuasive, but especially dwells on their earnestness and power. His sermons (she remarks) were rich in evangelical truth; and she particularly specifies those on the priesthood and intercession of the Lord Jesus; on the messages of our Lord to the seven leading churches of proconsular Asia, and a very impressive one on the words, 'Be filled with the Spirit.' This lady adds, Mr. Vasey was a sincere friend and a sympathising visitor of the afflicted. He was a benevolent man, denying himself to give to the cause of God and the poor.

"The respect felt for his memory in Hull was evinced on the occasion of the sermon preached in the Waltham-street Chapel, with special reference to his death, and that of the Rev. Richard Felvus. Though the service

was in the evening of a week day, every sitting in this noble chapel was occupied, and a solemn and holy influence rested on the congregation, as I endeavoured to magnify the grace of God in these honoured servants of His, and especially dwelt on the abundant consolation afforded to Mr. Vasey in the immediate prospect of his great change.

"H. W. WILLIAMS.

"Hull, Nov. 29, 1871."

CHAPTER VIII.

BRADFORD EAST.

On Saturday, September 9th, 1854, Mr. Vasey, with his family, entered upon their new home in Bradford, to which they were warmly welcomed. A letter to a friend in his late circuit, describes his first impressions and prospects, and manifests the zeal and heartiness with which he gave himself to the duties of his new sphere of labour.

My Dear Sir, *Bradford, September 21st*, 1854.

I know you will be glad to learn that we have got settled in our new home—my wife in her house and myself in my work. I think we can see now how the land lies, and that we have every prospect of being comfortable. The people here are rough, but sensible and shrewd, and withal kind and respectful. Eastbrook Chapel is a very large one, and has a good congregation, perhaps more than could get into Waltham-street. I have preached there four times; and I think I shall in time feel at home with them; but I miss your bright eyes and other well-known faces, the sight of which used to draw me out in Waltham-street. Last Sunday night we held a prayer meeting, and had three penitents; and I intend to preach more than ever with a view to save souls. I find the people here, generally, in a low religious state, but desirous of spiritual improvement. The Saturday night band-meeting is much inferior in its tone to Waltham-street.

There is not a pew to be had in this large chapel. After quarter-day, I shall be better able to tell you what kind of a working staff we have in this circuit, but I think we shall find plenty of good material to work with, if only the Spirit of God baptize us more richly.

I have preached out of doors once in the suburbs of the town. We shall have to employ this method of usefulness a good deal; there is much infidelity amongst the working classes. I shall not forget Hull very soon, I assure you, and continue to keep you in my file of daily prayers. Nothing would please me more than to hear of a glorious revival of the work of God among you. My wife joins me in love to you and yours.

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS VASEY.

Mr. Vasey had for his Superintendent the first year of his appointment in Bradford Circuit, the Rev. Joseph Stinson, and for the two following years, the Rev. Dr. Jobson. The Rev. B. B. Waddy was second minister, and Mr. Vasey third in the staff.

In his new field of service, Mr. Vasey found a rather different material to work upon. He had been introduced amongst a manufacturing population, and had to deal with spirits of great activity and enterprise as well as of intelligence; the very people to whom his ministry was likely to prove useful and acceptable. And so it was. Amongst all classes his ministrations found acceptance and were to profit. The rich man, the man of business, and the poor man, in his congregations were each enlightened as to the needs, dangers, and duties of their respective positions, and fed spiritually with food convenient for them. And to none of these was he more pointed, faithful and powerful, than to the man of business. Not one of this class, if pursuing, in his search after gain, a course contrary to the principles of honesty and uprightness, could sit in ease under the ministry of Mr. Vasey. But to the souls sincerely desiring (whilst in the pursuit of things temporal) to keep in view those which are eternal—to subordinate the interests of the present life to that of the future and everlasting; his preaching could not fail to be instructive and encouraging. One testifies, and his was the experience of many, that Mr. Vasey's preaching went right to his heart and clung to it; so that when away on business—in his association with men of his class, and exposed to temptations incident to his calling, he was withheld from entering into the spirit or practice of anything which would not be in accordance with the precepts of God's Holy Word.

On his entrance upon each new sphere, Mr. Vasey, in his anxiety that his ministrations should yield the heaviest returns, adapted himself as much as possible to the constitution and temperament of the people of his charge. From year to year, as the conviction that every

sermon must become "the savour of life unto life," or of "death unto death," was more vividly realized by him, though he did not cease to address the minds of his hearers (in which case, he would have been guilty of hiding one of his greatest talents in a napkin), he allowed the useful to preponderate over the merely intellectual. Hence, in striving to drive home his arguments to the conscience, he dealt more freely in figures and facts for the purpose of illustration. And there is no doubt that these illustrations, which were most natural and vivid, conduced greatly to the effectiveness of Mr. Vasey's pulpit ministry. This feature was noticeable in an increased degree in Mr. Vasey's discourses in Bradford. This close reasoning spoke to the heart through a well chosen illustration, applied by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the spring of 1855, the Missionary Deputation for Ireland included the name of Rev. Thomas Vasey. His destination was the west part of that country, and he made part of the travelling in company with his co-deputies: the Revs. Charles Prest, Dr. Hoole, Henry H. Chettle, and George Scott.

He was accustomed to write daily to his wife when absent from home, and his letters to her at this period are so interesting, and disclose so much of his domestic affections, that we think it desirable to transcribe extracts from them. In the first letter, written from Dublin, he writes:—"Well, my dear lassie, I hope you will keep up your spirits and improve in health. I have been looking at my work and lifting up my heart for power to do it faithfully, and my mind is quite relieved from care, for I feel that I am in the way of duty, and fully believe that God will take of you and the children, better than I could have done if I had been with you."

"Moate, 29th March, 1855. . . . . After writing last night, I got a pretty sound sleep of 5½ hours—made a good breakfast—nearly finished an article for the *Watchman*, and about 11 o'clock set off for Moate, distant twelve Irish miles. On our way we passed through a

bleak and dreary country, in which the hovels of the peasantry were pretty thickly scattered. Most of the children were without shoes, stockings, and hats; and the grown up people in rags, yet all wearing an expression of humour and hilarity, strangely in contrast with the wretchedness of their appearance. It was very difficult to distinguish the abodes of the cattle from those of the biped owners of them, the most certain sign being the peat-reek coming out of the door. I dismounted and entered one of these hovels, and found it thoroughly warm and comfortable, the peat-reek filling the whole apartment, and neither so unpleasant nor so unhealthy as you might suppose; the inside of the thatch was pendent with flakes of soot, and the rafters thoroughly blackened, and as I was examining it, the lady of the house apologized for the state of the roof, by stating that a cow had accidentally walked into it a few days before!

"Well we had a very comfortable dinner, and I finished my article, and after tea went to the meeting at 6 o'clock. A little plain chapel without a gallery—the pulpit, that in which Mr. Wesley preached; a congregation of about 60 persons, very respectable and intelligent in appearance, including several of the constabulary (a fine set of fellows, with quite a soldierly bearing, without whom the people say it would be impossible to live in Ireland), and all very serious and attentive. . . . I find perfect freedom both of body and mind for my work, and the presence and help of God in it." . . . .

"Dublin, 2nd April, 1855. . . . . I am afraid you would be disappointed in my last—it was so very hastily written. I had only about three minutes to save the post. I will now go back to Moate, from which I started at 8.30 on Saturday morning. We had the rail all the way by Maynooth to Dublin, and it is really very comfortable travelling, as compared with the road: for in the wild bog country, at every turn of the road, is a sort of ambuscade, behind which you may picture some murderous Riband man lying in wait for you. I had

about two hours at Maynooth—visited the college, which has been enlarged to twice its former size by the grant from Parliament—the premises are neat and substantial, but plain, and there is no great air of comfort and luxury about anything there; the chapel is a poor place, dressed up with faded tinsel ornament; the dining-room good, but without either fire-place or stove; the room intended for a library—not yet occupied—and the library itself in the old premises, a very meagre affair, with few books of general literature, and apparently very little read; the librarian being a common porter, and the students only being admitted by an express order from the principal or professors. I spent a good deal of time among the books, and it appeared as if they did not like it, for one of the priests was sent in to watch my movements, and to listen to my remarks. As to the priests themselves, they appeared not to be overdone with study, bluff coarse-looking young men, apparently from the lower classes, and not at all having the appearance or manners of collegians.

"Well to yesterday. In the morning, at 12, preached in Ranelagh Chapel from the mountains and valleys, to about 200 very respectable people. The chapel is a new one, in the Gothic style, seats about 250, and is in the suburbs of the city; evening, at 7 o'clock, in the Abbey Chapel, to about 500 people, from the promise to Thyatira. I was so pleased with them, and they it appears with me, that I consented at their request to preach this morning at 8 o'clock, which I have done accordingly, to a congregation of sixty people, many of whom had walked in, three miles through the rain, after having walked home last night through a storm of wind and wet.

"Athlone, 3rd April, 1855. . . . I am now in my bedroom, and as I find a bright fire of turf, I am tempted to have a bit of talk with you before I go to bed. I find my time is so much taken up in the day, that I can only command some convenient opportunity for writing in my bedroom either at night or in the morning. My letters have been mere logs of my journey, and notes by the

way; and so I may as well to-night (in the absence of any new facts or events) just tell you a bit of my mind. You must not think, because my letters have contained so little of what is sentimental, that I have forgotten to cherish you in my heart. On the contrary, I have not ceased to think and to pray about you by night or by day. I never take out any of my neckcloths, etc., without being reminded of the care you have bestowed upon my outfit. I never was sent away in better style anywhere, and I shall try to show myself worthy of such pains, by economizing as much as possible the use of them. It is indeed a great blessing to have such a faithful and affectionate wife, and I feel more thankful for you day by day. My sense of your value to me increases, and especially of late; and I sometimes regret that, owing to the state of our finances, I could not make you more comfortable in return. Indeed I greatly fear that you abridge yourself of many comforts which you really require, and I must caution you against doing this while I am away, under the idea of saving. It would be very distressing to me if I thought that any anxiety I sometime show to economise our expenditure, should have the effect of impairing your comforts. . . . Amidst all my anxieties about you I am comforted by the belief, that you are safer under God's special care than you would be if I were with you, and I feel sure, if you are not wanting to yourself, God's care of you will not fail. Do, my darling, put your whole trust in Him, and cast all your care upon Him, and you will be saved both from danger and from fear. You may dismiss from your mind all anxiety on my account. . . . .

"Methodism is very low in the place, and the chapel, which was built by Mr. Wesley, is both an awkward place and in a very inconvenient neighbourhood—like most of the chapels of that date, it was purposely built in an out of the way place to avoid persecution and interference. . . ."

"Ballinasloe, 5th April, 1855. . . . We had a very good meeting last night, and they all professed to have

been wonderfully impressed with my speech; though I thought at the time it fell rather dead, but you really cannot tell how these Irish people are feeling under either speech or sermon. . . ."

"Galway, 5 p.m.—Well, here I am in the metropolis of Romanism in the West of Ireland—a city on the shores of the Atlantic, 22,000 inhabitants, seventeen Popish chapels, twelve or thirteen convents and monasteries, and the usual accompaniments of rags and wretchedness. It appears this place was originally founded by the Spaniards, and many of the houses bear the marks of Spanish architecture. Nature has done everything for the place and man nothing; immense blocks of a kind of marble lie about four miles in the country; a spacious harbour in which all the fleets of Europe could ride; a railway to Dublin, and telegraphic communication with London, but all to no use so long as this cursed Popery rests like an incubus on the people. . . . The people here nearly all speak the native Irish; and the women are dessed in bright red petticoats, which are characteristic of the Connaught peasantry. I am now at the end of my railway conveyance, and shall have for the next two days, 100 miles of riding in the open cars of the country; if I can stand that well, I shall consider myself very fortunate. . . ."

"Ballina, 11th April, 1855. . . . My journey yesterday was the worst I have had yet. Through a very bare, bleak, uninteresting country, which I had travelled over before—quite a retrogade movement and through a perfect hurricane of wind and sleet. The friends at Sligo provided me with some additional protection in the shape of a large fur apron in front reaching from the chest to the ancles, and a woollen wrap for the neck and shoulders. Thus equipped I took no harm at all, and kept quite snug and warm all the way. The car, however, was stopped two or three times by the wind, and at other times nearly overturned into the bog. We had, however, a very hospitable reception at Ballina. I got into a comfortable bedroom with a glowing peatfire, and

had a good night's rest. The meeting was well attended. —deep interest excited, and the collection considerably more than last year. . . . I think I forgot to say that when at Galway, in the Queen's College, I spent some time in the anatomical department, and, amongst other things, examined the skull of a man who had been executed a few months before for the murder of a woman; the organ of destructiveness was so fully developed that the skull in that part was as thin as a wafer, and quite transparent, and he had a double row of front teeth, altogether very like a cannibal. And now I must address myself to my journey, which takes me right through Sligo again, and nearly twenty miles beyond, but I am in good spirits. I have no sense of weariness whatever. This is the last long journey I have before me, and what is best of all, I may consider myself as coming nearer home every stage. This is my great desire, and I feel it difficult to repress it so as to keep it within proper bounds; my home affections are very strong, and my own sweet wife is the queen of my soul. I would give something for a kiss of you just now, and I think, when I return, you will have to use the same protection for your face that the saint's pictures in St. Petersburgh have. Good-bye, my love. . . ."

"Drumshambo, 13th April, 1855. . . . Yesterday we left Manor Hamilton at about half-past ten, and had a tedious drive of about five hours to this place. Three preachers accompanied me. We baited an hour on the road, and I took the opportunity to visit a National School; examined the top class in geography and English grammar, and was better satisfied with them than I have been in many an English school. Prayed with the landlord and his wife at the inn where we stopped, they being Methodists, and talked to some of the people in their cabins; the little place was quite in a stir, and the priest came out to see what was going on, but I experienced no molestation. . . . ."

"Enniskillen, 16th April, 1855. . . . I had good congregations yesterday, and collections nearly double

those of last year. In the morning I preached from 'My God shall supply all your need,' and in the evening from 'The love of Christ constraineth us;' and I have reason to believe that some lasting good will result from these services.

"I have a letter from Mr. McArthur, of Dublin, inviting me to spend a day or two with him on my return to that place, and shall accept his offer of showing me the 'lions,' to the extent of a few hours on Thursday afternoon."

"Brookborough County, Fermanagh, 17th April, 1855. —Arrived at Derry at 10 o'clock this morning, after a very pleasant journey, during which we passed the chapel in which Dr. Clarke preached his first sermon. We also took in, at different stations, parties of Irish emigrants, and we had some good specimens of the style of howling which prevails among women at wakes, &c. Certainly they were scenes for a painter.

"I was exceedingly gratified by my visit to Derry. The old walls are completely and religiously preserved, as are several of the bastions, which were mounted with the same guns as were used in the siege, and one of which still bears the name of 'Roaring Meg,' because it did most execution in defence of the town. I went up to the top of Walker's monument, which commands a view of the entire coast, and especially of that part of the river where the Papists had placed the ram across to prevent the approach of ships to the relief of the town. Saw also the principal gateway, over which there are various historical devices; and amongst the rest there is the head of James on the outside, with the date of 1569 over it, and bearing an expression of disappointed malignity, whilst in the inside, under date 1690, is the noble-looking head of William of Orange. Upon the whole it is a glorious old town. We have had our meeting; a very good one. I am in capital spirits at the idea of getting home, and can hardly sleep for joy."

In May of this year, Mr. Vasey was threatened with a return of the symptoms from which he had suffered in

Hull, doubtless from overtaxed strength; but with care, the danger was averted. A kind friend, in his last Circuit, wrote to warn him against an undue expenditure of strength, as follows:—

On Thursday last, I heard you were ill. Now, my dear Mr. Vasey, allow me to urge you to try to live. I most fully believe you live to God, but you must also strive to prolong your stay on earth, both for the work of God, and the great claim of your dear partner and your children.

I am induced to write to you thus, from the benefit I have received from your teaching, and the regard I have toward you. I was in Bradford a fortnight ago, and was told that you had just before been exerting yourself in public speaking to such an extent, as, I used playfully to say, was sinning against your body. May God, our Father, direct and long preserve you in health, for your family, the Church, and the world's sake.

On the 23rd of June, 1855, an addition was made to the family in the person of another son. This child was physically feeble from his birth, and was only lent to his parents for the short space of four years.

During the next six months, the health of the household was tolerably good, and in the faithful discharge of his duties, and in happy intercourse with the people, Mr. Vasey pursued his course, holding himself in readiness for any service for the benefit of his circuit, and entering with his whole soul into any work which fell to his lot, or called for attention.

The deep interest which, during the whole course of his ministry, Mr. Vasey manifested in the training of children, was never more strikingly shown than at Bradford East, in both town and country. In connection with Eastbrook were large and effective Sunday and day-schools, to which he gave unremitting and careful attention, frequently visiting them, and conducting short examinations, in order to ascertain the progress of the children. At the children's public services, Mr. Vasey was always happy and successful, joining with them most heartily in singing their beautiful hymns, and with happy tact, drawing out their little stores of knowledge, and never failing to inculcate some moral lessons with religious truth.

Eastbrook Chapel has long been distinguished by its fine music and singing, to secure which a large sum is expended annually. These were a great source of pleasure to Mr. Vasey, who always engaged in the service of song as devoutly and heartily as in other parts of the worship of the sanctuary. His selection of hymns was strikingly appropriate to the occasion, and the subjects, those at the opening of the service, being always calculated to inspire in the breast of the worshipper feelings of awe, solemnity, and adoring gratitude and praise, and were some of the finest in Mr. Wesley's collection; witness,—"O God of good, the unfathomed sea;" "Creator, Spirit, by whose aid;" "God is a name my soul adores;" "Messiah, joy of every heart;" "How lovely are Thy tents, O Lord." In giving out the hymns, as in reading the lessons, no one hearing Mr. Vasey could avoid the impression that his heart accompanied the words, and a corresponding effect was produced upon the hearer; while in singing, Mr. Vasey's bass voice mingled with the swelling notes of the organ, and the voices of the choir and congregation, and in its depth and heartiness could often be distinguished amid the whole.

The last month of the year 1855 threatened bereavement to Mr. Vasey, his good mother being dangerously ill. His filial affection and solicitude, and brotherly sympathy were expressed in the following letter to his sisters:—

Bradford, Dec. 31st, 1855.

My dear Mary and Jane,

I was truly sorry to learn from both your letters the critical state of mother's health.

If she can be rallied at all, it will only be by some diet adapted to thin the blood; and I should think if immediate danger is past, she ought to live upon little else than apple-tea and toast.

I shall hold myself ready to come down at an hour's notice, and if any danger occurs, you must use the telegraph. I should by all means wish to see her alive, and if possible, administer to her the Lord's Supper before she goes. You must both of you look up for comfort and help, and I shall pray continually for you. Tell mother from me that I am glad to learn she is firm in faith; nothing else will do but the Rock of Ages, and that will never fail.

I enclose the half of a £5 note, and will send the other half on learning the receipt of this.

Meanwhile, in great haste,

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS VASEY.

The loss menaced was delayed for above a year and a half, and the commencement of a new year found Mr. Vasey engaged with both travelling and local preachers in conducting revival services throughout the Circuit. Into these he entered with his usual earnestness and zeal. Ere now, it must have been apparent to the reader that Mr. Vasey was not one who looked only for conversions through some special agent or means. In the regular course of his ministry, he was accustomed to look for the Lord to work with him, and to confirm the Word with "signs following." But in his absorbing desire to win souls from the dominion of Satan, he was ever ready to join in the use of extraordinary efforts, "if by any means" he "might save some." At special service seasons it was his wont first to endeavour to rouse unfaithful, drowsy professors to their danger and duty; next, to warn sinners of their perilous position; and, lastly, to strive to bring the latter to religious decision. The following concise notes embody the substance of three addresses delivered during a series of these occasions at Eastbrook:—

ON SPIRITUAL DECLENSION.

This appropriate as the introductory subject. God, in His judgments, begins at the Sanctuary; at the House of God, with the righteous; and if we would not be judged of the Lord, we must judge ourselves.

I. Wherein this state consists.

1. Absence of religious progress—religion essentially progressive—"perfecting holiness"—"follow holiness"—"way of holiness"—"prize of the high calling"—"race set before us." The element is love, and that must perpetually increase, where its object is perfect and infinite.

2. Failure of religious comfort. Witness of the Spirit only enjoyed when the work of the Spirit is allowed; no comfort without a clear conversion; but a tender conscience cannot be clear where spiritual declension exists.

3. Impaired religious strength. Joy of the Lord the strength of

His people; pressure from without. Temptation, worldliness, vanity, trouble, rapidly exhaust the feeble Christian.

4. Obscured religious light. In order to light, there must be a right state of the heart. "If any man do His will." "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness." Instance Laodicea. "If the light of the body be the eye, and that light be darkness, how great," &c.

5. Loss of moral rectitude. More total and complete where former experiences, light, and opportunities have been great. Judas, Peter, Ananias and Sapphira, David, Solomon. Methodist backslider most of all.

II. Guilt and danger of this state.

1. It is offensive to God: Father as the husbandman: Son as in Ephesus: "I have it against thee." Holy Ghost, who is thereby grieved, vexed, and finally turned to be our enemy.

2. It is disastrous in its effects on the Church and the world.

3. It is ruinous to the soul. Progressive like disease, which grows as the patient pines. Self-perpetuating as the disordered machinery of a watch; the moral powers impaired, and force of motion lost. Soul destroying—drawing back into perdition.

III. Remedy for it: repentance, faith, renewal, dedication. Apply to Ephesian backsliders, to Laodicean, to infidel, to such as never had anything but the name of religion.

"The Wrath to Come."

Rev. vi. 15—17—"And the kings of the earth," &c. "For the great day of His wrath is come."

First state the necessity for dwelling on the subject, owing to the general aspect of mercy which characterises God's dispensations to mankind in the Christian age.

I. Explain the nature of this wrath, and the grounds of it. It is not as in man, a fitful, ungovernable, irrational *temper*, but an essential state of the Divine mind toward sin. It is founded on antipathy, because sin is the abominable thing which He hateth; it is characterised by indignation, being a deep resentment of the sins of men, as an unmerited affront offered to His Majesty; it is mingled with disgust at the baseness and ingratitude of sinners; it is embittered by the pertinacious rejection of His gracious overtures; it is roused to fierceness and to fury by the defiant attitude of sinners. It is the wrath of a Sovereign provoked by a rebellion; of a judge called into activity by transgression. It is the wrath of ill-requited love; it is the wrath of meekness incensed; it is the wrath of a Father; it is the wrath of a Redeemer; and, finally, it is the wrath of Omnipotence; irresistible, crushing and everlasting. "He is angry with the wicked every day," with swearers, drunkards, sabbath-breakers, whoremongers, forgetters of God, unbelievers, and all who love not the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. This wrath is not inconsistent with the goodness of God, nor with His patience, nor with the economy of grace; but it is the natural and necessary result of all these in the case of impenitent sinners. The goodness of God binds Him to detect sin, and to punish it; the patience of God only restrains, but does not disarm or

destroy His wrath; the economy of His grace is founded on the fact of His wrath, and is intended to procure for men the means, the nature, and the opportunity to escape it; but in case these fail, the judgments of God take their natural course, and only fall the heavier for having been delayed. Quote Romans ii. 4—9; 1, 16—18.

III. The wrath is yet to come.

What has already come is only the overflowings of wrath; the destruction of the old world, of Sodom, of Babylon; the subversion of kingdoms, the extermination of the Canaanites, the judicial dispersion of the Jews, the mounds and ruins that cover the earth, the dead that people the earth and the sea, all attest the reality of His wrath, but not its utmost energy and fury; but the residue of wrath is reserved for the great day of wrath, and the memorial of it shall be the cloud of smoke evermore arising before the throne of God and the Lamb, and darkly fringing the radiant brightness of His glory.

NECESSITY OF IMMEDIATE DECISION.

1. The materials for such a decision are prepared, and delay cannot augment them. The choice is between God and Satan, between sin and holiness, between things temporal and eternal, between heaven and hell. Now, whatever may at any time enable us to decide between these alternatives, exists now; and because the difference between these several objects of choice is inherent, inseparable, and unalterable, time can in no wise make that difference either less or greater.

2. The only certain time and opportunity for decision is *now*. The area over which the power of choice on our part extends, is never larger than the period of our natural life; if *we* have not decided within that time, God will decide for us, and he that is unjust shall be unjust still. But what portion of this life do we possess but the present moment? Hence the stress laid in the Scriptures on the word *now*. "Acquaint *now* thyself with Him," &c. "Save *now* I beseech Thee, O Lord." "Return you *now* every man from his evil way." "Come, for all things are *now* ready." "*Now* it is high time to wake out of sleep." "Behold *now* is the accepted time, *now* the day of salvation."

3. Every day's delay makes it more difficult to decide aright. The power of sin gradually overpowers the will; it acts like a poison, and requires immediate treatment. The understanding becomes perverted and deceived; the conscience becomes seared and callous. This is especially the case with respect to sins of unbelief, and sins against the light of truth. The Spirit of God diminishes, and finally withdraws His grace.

To a young minister, who prized and often sought his counsel, Mr. Vasey wrote, April 15th, 1856:—

MY DEAR JOHN,

If I have not sooner replied to your note, you must not infer that it is for want of interest in your fortunes. I was pleased to receive the information about your position, &c., &c. You know that my opinion is in favour of short residences in circuits for young

men during their first years of itinerancy, and therefore unless your actual usefulness is very great in the Circuit, and your prospective usefulness very promising, I counsel you to leave. I fear hasty sermonising for you. You have a certain readiness in sketching outlines and filling them up to a given mark, but what I want you to do is to dig deep and construct solidly, which you cannot do when you are hard pressed by external engagements. Be firm on this point, and do not yield except to a clear call of duty.

I have examined your texts of new sermons—pretty fair as to *number* for the time, if the *quality* is good. What pleases me most is your selection for Easter Sunday. I would strongly urge you to get a good assortment of sermons on the subjects of the great Christian festivals. Christianity is based upon facts, and if you expound the facts, you are sure to get hold of the doctrines, and to get them at the foundation too. A careful study of these facts for a year or two, would enable you afterwards to preach from any text you like.

We are doing pretty well here both spiritually and financially. As to the former we have had about two hundred conversions last quarter; and as to the latter we are raising £4,000 against the debt of £6,000 and have already secured £2,500. This, and Mr. Jobson's absence in America, will keep me busy enough, and has been mainly the cause of my not writing sooner to you. I find wherever I go plenty of work, I suppose upon the principle of the willing horse. Mrs. Vasey and Lizzie unite in kind regards. We are tolerably well.

Yours, affectionately,

THOMAS VASEY.

In July, Mrs. Vasey's health becoming more seriously affected, Mr. Vasey took her to Edinburgh for medical advice, and after seeing her settled comfortably in lodgings, left her in the company of one of her sisters, and returned to his ministerial duties. Unforeseen changes arose, necessitating most severe medical treatment; but Mr. Vasey remained at his post, trusting the care of his wife to Him about whose business he was accupied; only taking a few days from his circuit work to conduct her (when able to bear the journey) to her home. It is fitting to record here the generous and loving sympathy expressed towards the pastor and his wife in this season of affliction by the people of Bradford East. How greatly the load of it was lightened to them by their considerate kindness, could only be estimated by themselves. It is certain that it bound them in closer and endearing ties to the society of Eastbrook.

In the autumn of this year the nursery was invaded by

sickness; all the children of the household suffered from severe colds, whilst Arthur, the youngest, was, for some time in danger from repeated attacks of croup, which produced in his parents anxious hearts, &c. But the approach of Christmas found the family in better health, and in circumstances of great comfort and happiness. A letter addressed to Mr. Vasey's mother at this season, gives a peep at his home life.

Bradford, Christmas Eve, 1856.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I just write you a few lines to wish you a very happy Christmas, and to congratulate you on having so many of your children around you. I sincerely hope that every external circumstance in your lot will be of so cheerful a character, as to assist you in cherishing those feelings of gratitude to God which the gift of His Son demands at your hand. You may rejoice in the fact that your children are partakers of the grace which the incarnation of a Divine Saviour brought to mankind, and are bidding fair to realise all the eternal benefits of His passion. And I think it ought to cheer you in your last days, that one of your children is engaged in proclaiming the wondrous love of God towards a world of lost sinners, and feels it his delight to do so. You have perhaps further reason to be thankful that your family have the prospect of more temporal happiness and comfort than have fallen to their lot for some years past. As for myself, though the sun of my domestic circle seems declining, yet it has a rich mellow radiance, that is perhaps more soothing and really tranquillising to the soul, than the brightness and the heat of earlier hours. If you could see us to-night all neat and tidy round the fireside, with a good Christmas-log burning on the hearth, and plenty of good Christmas cheer in the pantry withal, while mamma (having shut us all out) is preparing to surprise us with a Christmas-tree in the study, you would not think us very badly off. We can report nothing but down-hill work with Mary Jane, but for the rest all well. Our united love to Mary and Jane, James and his wife.

Your affectionate son,

THOMAS VASEY.

During this month Mr. Vasey delivered lectures on behalf of the Wesleyan Institute in Bradford, subject,—"The Study of History." This was one of many able, interesting, and instructive lectures which he had accumulated from year to year, and which had been written with a view to usefulness and occasionally delivered for some good object, and with great success. But, though he had many temptations to exercise his talents in this

way, and might have done so to his own profit and popularity, as he became increasingly absorbed in the business of soul-saving, he felt that he could not conscientiously occupy himself in any service which would not directly tend to promote the great aim and work of his life; and though often earnestly pressed for aid in this way he gradually discontinued delivering lectures, laying aside what had cost him much time and mental labour. This course was an addition to the sum of self-sacrificing acts which were the fruits of his pervading passion for souls.

The following is the lecture before mentioned, which we give as reported in the newspapers:—

WESLEYAN INSTITUTE LECTURES.

The third of this series of lectures was delivered by the Rev. Thomas Vasey, of Bradford, on Friday evening last, on which occasion George Turner, Esq., M.D., occupied the chair. The subject of the evening's lecture was, "The Study of History." The rev. gentleman, on rising, was received with loud applause. After a few preliminary observations, he said that his remarks might be arranged under three topics of inquiry, viz.: "Where are we to find history? What are the advantages to be derived from its study?" and, "How may we best apply ourselves to it?" First:—"Where are we to find history?" Properly speaking, history is defined to be the narrative of events in connection with the supposed causes and ascertained effects. And in this view we are to seek for it in those records which are preserved in books, such as the Holy Scriptures, the annals of nations, the chronicles of kings, and the biographies of public men. Of these, the historical books of the Bible must be regarded as the purest and perfect types of such narratives. The amount of information which they give as to the early ages of the world is very considerable; it is infallibly accurate, and must be received as such, not only on the *à priori* ground of its Divine inspiration, but because it has been proved, beyond all doubt, to be the most ancient and authentic record *extant*. Second:—We must look for the materials of history in those external monuments which serve to illustrate and supplement those records. The mounds which indicate the site of ancient ruins—medals—coins—inscriptions, names of places—ancient institutions—popular traditions and languages, all subserve the purpose of history; they record events, exhibit the progress of arts and industry; they even indicate the moral sentiments of a people. In the language of any nation which has left behind it sufficient specimens, will be found registered with great accuracy the gradual decay of its morals, until having survived the wreck of nations, the principles and political existence of which it was the exponent, it becomes itself a dead language, and like the tombstone over a grave, only tells

that the dead lie beneath it. It is a singular fact, that at this advanced period of the world's age we are daily acquiring more authentic materials for the history of the most ancient nations; and it is probable that, in a few years, from the excavations of Nineveh and other places, we shall know as much of the history of the Assyrian empire as our children now know of England under Queen Elizabeth. Hence, we should not overlook that wonderful chapter in the history of the earth which geology has unfolded to our view. This science has elicited—from the examination of the layers which constitute the under crust of the globe, and of the fossil remains imbedded in them—and from the history of the world in the ages anterior to the creation of the human race. It has established the order, and almost ascertained the process of the foundation of strata; and has furnished us with the natural history of those germs of organized living creatures which belonged to each successive formation. "What are the advantages to be derived from the study of history?" The improvement of the mind, as an instrument of thought; the increase of the materials for thought; and the acquisition of practical wisdom. First:—"Improvement of the mind, as an instrument of thought." This is an object always to be kept in view in the education of youth. There are many studies of which it may be difficult to affirm or to demonstrate the practical utility as applied to the affairs of life, which are, notwithstanding, valuable as a means of mental cultivation. The science of pure mathematics has chiefly this value; and the study of the ancient classic writers is mainly to be recommended on this ground. The study of history has a direct tendency to develop and improve the mental powers. It promotes the more rapid attainment of that maturity of judgment which usually is acquired only by the slow process of years, and enables the young man, who uses diligence, to say with truth: "I know more than the ancients." The improvement of the mental faculties which arises from an extensive observation of human nature, and which distinguishes the city merchant from the simple swain, belongs also to the study of history, which familiarizes us with the usual combinations of qualities found in certain characters; so that from the presence of one you may infer the existence of others, and the relative force of those motives that have more or less guided the minds of men in all ages. And lastly:—The mind itself—whilst it roams over past ages, and travels wherever man has left the impress of his genius and his crimes, and absorbs into its own being all the elements of thought and action which have ever given character and impulse to the human race—must feel conscious of powers and instincts which attest the nobility of its nature, the grandeur of its destiny, and the awful issues of its illimitable being.—"Materials for thought." Next to having the mind in a roused and active state, it is of importance that it is stored with copious materials to operate upon. Having acquired the facts which history furnishes, the mind is engaged in classifying them under distinct heads;—it analyses, compares, traces the occult analogies of things, distinguishes between what is accidental and what is essential, and becomes possessed of those abstract ideas which constitute the mind, and like the pearls and gems in which the oriental merchant invests the proceeds of his successful traffic, and which

enable him to show his wealth in the least possible compass, and to carry it about with him at the least possible risk and inconvenience. Such are some of the advantages which the student of history has over the thoughtless and the uninformed. With him there need be no irksome solitude of the mind. He can conjure up or dismiss, at pleasure, the mighty dead of past ages—not to scare him by their grim and ghastly spectres—but to read to him the moral of their lives, and to instruct him either by their vices, their misfortunes, or their deeds of virtue. It is unnecessary to add, that to a mind thus furnished there will be superadded the charm and the powers that lie in interesting conversation. In the place of the dull, vapid, frivolous, and injurious matter which often constitutes the gossip of the fireside, the verbiage of the streets or the workshop, the general study of history would introduce subjects of discussion which would be both instructing and improving.—" The acquisition of practical wisdom;" a few lessons of which may be classified as follows:—Individual character—social institutions—and political expediency. Upon the whole the testimony of history is in favour of individual virtue;—there are few readers who would not rather be Aristides than Pericles;—it encourages individuals to stand against the corruptions of their age and their country, for it immortalizes Cato rather than Cæsar. It animates into immense force and vigour the principles of individual self-reliance, for it points with honourable distinction to Miltiades and Hannibal and Belisarius, who, by the indomitable energy of will changed the whole aspect of a nation's affairs and retrieved a ruined cause. Let us not forget to place in the niche of this temple of fame the name of our own immortal Wellington, whose shadow will grow larger by the lapse of time. Nothing is adapted to tell with more moral effect upon the men of this generation than the conviction with which history furnishes us, that posterity will do justice to their virtues and their principles rather than to their achievements. Archimedes is already a greater man than Alexander. Daniel O'Connell has long since gone to the "tomb of the Capulets," with all the hollow patriots of antiquity; and Louis Napoleon may rest assured that if he does not according to the oracle attributed to him—" die on a dunghill "—his memory will rot among the knaves who have played high, risked heavy stakes, and lost all at last.—" Social institutions." The records of history lift up a warning voice to admonish us of the peril of neglecting the lower order of the people. The Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans, were all chargeable with this neglect, and owed the downfall of their power mainly to it. Founded for the most part on the military basis, they valued population chiefly as the means of tilling their land and recruiting their armies. Underneath all the grace and elegance of Greek civilization, and all the excellent civil institutions of Roman polity, there lay the sore of a labouring population uncared for and oppressed. Their religion did nothing to remedy this state of things; and priests, philosophers, and politicians alike ignored and despised the common people. The records of history admonish us that slavery as a permanent institution is incompatible with the safety of civilized nations. All the great nations of antiquity maintained slavery, but it was a source of weakness to them all. The slavery of the Israelites in Egypt was the ruin

of the country, and occasioned the overthrow of the royal dynasty of the shepherd kings. The Roman slaves involved them in murderous and destructive social wars, and so barbarized the Roman people that they have never recovered from its effects; and our American cousins might, if they would, notwithstanding their sharp retort upon us, read in the page of history the inevitable truth, that if they do not destroy slavery, slavery will destroy them. The records of history also teach us how important it is to the soundness and safety of social institutions, that the fair sex should occupy an honoured, influential, and elevated position in society. The sanctity of marriage and the obligation of rearing children in knowledge and virtue, together with the supremacy of the wife in the domestic circle, have never been disregarded with impunity. The bone and sinew of a nation lie in the order and happiness of well-regulated families; and it may be safely affirmed that the civilization and refinement of manners, together with the general happiness of the community, have never advanced beyond a limited extent when those conditions have been wanting. The nations who issued from the heart of Germany and overrun the Western Empire, were remarkable for the respect they paid their women. The French, probably, owe much of their proverbial heartlessness, recklessness of life, and predisposition to revolutionary outbreaks, to the slender influence exercised upon the national character by the charms of domestic life; while, on the other hand, the English owe their strong love of country and the stability of their institutions to the purity, inviolability, and untold comfort of their home and hearth. History teaches us that it is impolitic for nations whose position or bent renders them chiefly maritime or commercial, to extend their foreign territorial possessions. Such possessions are found to complicate the internal machinery of government, to afford more numerous points of aggression to hostile powers, to necessitate the upholding of a large military force, which is always opposed to the interests and inclinations of a commercial community, and to entail a burden of taxation upon the industrial classes. History teaches us that a liberal treatment of colonial dependencies, with a view to self-government and ultimate independence, is the most advantageous to the mother country. The Phœnicians and Carthaginians have given us the best example of colonization upon liberal principles. They preferred the advantages of mutual commerce to the nominal prestige of control and government, and therefore left flourishing settlements mainly to themselves. History teaches us the folly of intervention on the part of one nation with the affairs of another, with a view to communicate to it improved institutions. These attempts have been made only by modern nations; the ancients were neither so refined in their sentiments nor so benevolent in their intentions. In modern Europe, however, two notable attempts have been made, in the name of benevolence, to propagate political institutions. The French Republic in 1798, chivalrously undertook to assist all European nations who wished to shake off their despotic monarchs and adopt a republican form of government; and animated by a similar knight-errantry of propagandism, the British nation has attempted to give what is called constitutional governments to Spain, Portugal, and Greece. It may be fairly predicted, as the result of these experiments, that the attempt

will not be repeated within the limits of the nineteenth century, and that it is a settled maxim that the institutions of one people will not necessarily agree with another. In fact, the political constitution of a nation is much more the work of the people themselves than of their rulers. It is a nation of slaves that creates and fosters a dynasty of despots. When a people have the will, the virtue, and the constancy to struggle for their liberty, they will ultimately win and maintain it; and when these are wanting, no external force can secure it for any people on the earth, and history comes here, with poetry, to assure us—

> "Freedom's battle, once begun,
> Bequeathed from b eeding sire to son,
> Though baffled oft, is ever wo 1."

The revolution of 1688 inaugurated the highest period in the history of our country, whilst it established the constitution on a truly Protestant basis; and if, in the more recent period of our history, we have somewhat dismantled our bulwarks in the dream of a false security, it may safely be affirmed that the ill effects on the public peace and welfare, have of late been sufficiently proved to warrant a more vigilant guard of what remains. And if only Queen Victoria, whom may God defend! be true to the principles on which she holds her crown—that the Pope of Rome has no jurisdiction in this realm—she may, through the blessing of Providence, add a chapter to our history which, while it illustrates the same great principles of the national greatness as the history of the past, will be unexampled for its glory amongst the annals of a free, loyal and Protestant people. The rev. gentleman closed his interesting lecture by several illustrations of the best method of studying history, stating that it was by the classification of facts under the heads of those subjects which they illustrated, that constituted the charm and the use of the study of history.

At the beginning of the year 1857, Mr. Vasey was again occupied, heart and soul, in special services, and the efforts he put forth on this occasion were so great and exhausting that he broke down physically, and was compelled to seek medical aid. Writing to his sister Mary, February 3rd, he made special reference to his condition. "We have had some very exciting, and very successful special services, which added to my ordinary and extra work, have broken down my throat and chest, and otherwise disabled me in part. I have had to go to my old remedy of nitrate of silver, and hope by taking what rest I can, to keep from total failure; but I am threatened with rhuematism as well, which may prove tedious. Mary Jane continues as usual with a gradual

subsidence of strength and increasing feebleness of appetite, but continues in some wonderful way to keep up her spirits, and to possess her soul in patience. I am happy in my work, and in my family too, and have too much reason to praise God for mercies past, ever to mistrust Him again. The kindness of the people is inexhaustible."

The return of spring witnessed a more gloomy side in the domestic picture. Mrs. Vasey was attacked with illness in a much more dangerous form, and for some days it seemed as though the long dreaded visitant had at length arrived, and was about to remove from the circle the wife and mother. But when, through the grace of God, faith, and resignation were in full exercise, the uplifted arm was arrested, and the sufferer given back as from the very jaws of death, though to a life of more confirmed suffering.

In reference to this visitation, and the effect produced upon himself, in a letter to his sister Jane, March 20th, Mr. Vasey says:—"As to my health it is still indifferent, though till within the last few days improving, and if I had better nights at home might I think rally. But we are down in the depths of trouble. Mary Jane has been ill again, and all last night we looked over her for death. It was indeed an awful time; we had to take our farewell, and could only wait the moment of dissolution in sadness and grief; but contrary to all expectation she rallied again, and to-day has shown some better signs; but fever is setting in, and I dread delirium coming on to-night. We are, however, trusting in God, and my mind is kept in peace to a wonderful degree, but my body is reduced to a very low state of physical and nervous depression.

"But God is good and friends are kind, and she herself is ready for her change, and so we wait and hope on. I had arranged to go off for three weeks or so immediately after Quarter-day, but all my plans must now be held at the mercy of the great monster who has so long hovered

round our dwelling, and now seems about to pounce upon his prey."

Again, on April 1st, Mr. Vasey writes:—"Matters have been much worse since I wrote to you, but, in spite of death, this remarkable girl of mine holds to life. So we are kept waiting—talking of the change—preparing for it, and enjoying as much as we can of each other's society under a sense of the precarious nature of this happiness. Mary Jane is wonderfully blessed and upheld, and since we had a sacramental service together, has felt a jealousy lest anything should draw her back to earth again. Of course all my plans for rest and change are knocked on the head at present, and I regret this the less as the weather is so cold and stormy.

"I have for the last ten days watched day and night by the sick bed, and I verily believe, have by prompt measures, saved her life several times; but I am nearly dished up, and shall be obliged to give up nursing by night at any rate.

"I have received and accepted an unanimous invitation from the Quarterly Meeting of the Leeds 1st Circuit, but my interest in the change depends upon whether I am to go in company with my wife or without her."

But though the actual stroke of death was averted in his own dwelling, yet was Mr. Vasey called to suffer bereavement. On the 28th of June, whilst rusticating with his family in the neighbourhood of Bradford, he was summoned to the dying bed of his good old mother. She had been attacked with apoplexy, and after twenty-four hours of total unconsciousness, whilst her children and two of her grandchildren were singing the last verse of the hymn, commencing "My God, the spring of all my joys," she opened her eyes, her breathing ceased, and she passed away to eternal rest.

The memory of his mother was deeply cherished by Mr. Vasey; he often quoted her sayings, &c., during the remainder of his life, and in death he anticipated her welcome to the home of the blessed.

The time now approached when he must take leave of

the society of Bradford East. An extract from a letter written in reference to this removal expresses the feelings of himself and family in prospect of it:—"We are sorry to leave Bradford, where we have been treated most kindly and generously, and where my ministry has been more successful than in any place where it has been exercised; yet, I dare say, we shall soon be at home in Leeds, and shall probably find a wide circle of visitable families."

The impressions left in Bradford of Mr. Vasey and his labours are testified in the succeeding notes. A minister writes:—

It was my privilege to be intimately acquainted with Mr. Vasey in the Bradford East Circuit. I greatly profited under his ministrations, and I shall cherish a grateful recollection of him all the days of my life. His name will always have an influence over me for good. He once said at my mother's tea-table that it was a principle with him to live on good terms with himself, "because," said he, "I am most with myself." Of course I understood him to mean that he lived on good terms with his own conscience.

I saw him frequently after that both in social and public life, and the more I saw of him the more convinced I was that he maintained a conscience void of offence. I was all the more struck with his piety because I believed that, owing to his temperament, he needed a great deal more than the common share in order to let his piety appear.

Another pen furnishes the following sketch, which represents the impressions of the many:—

The first time we saw Mr. Vasey in the Bradford Circuit was at the Band Meeting, on the night of his arrival. Our impression was of his being scrupulously neat and clean, and these features were striking in his appearance all the time he resided with us; and the same neatness and order characterised all he did. I especially notice this, because it was a symbol of the inner purity of the man. He was incapable of a mean action, and all his proceedings in Church affairs and in private life were manly and straightforward: marked in a word, by that transparent and simple nobleness which always adds so much to a minister's influence with his people.

This noble spirit was never more manifested than in his intercourse with his brother ministers. He lived in the spirit of the passage, "in honour preferring one another." To win respect for his colleagues, to speak highly of their excellencies, to throw a veil over their infirmities, to stand their friend in all trying circumstances, were features of character which were particularly prominent in Mr. Vasey.

He was conscientiously careful and exact in the management of his income. We have often heard him say that whatever the amount his principle and practice were to live within it.

He was also very scrupulous in making charges when out of his own circuit, and refused uniformly to receive from the funds of the charities, for which he had to appeal on special occasions, more than would just cover his expenses. The reason he assigned was, that he entered the ministry not for profit, but to preach the Gospel; had he supposed that gain was godliness, his calling would have led him to a quite different sphere: for the post he resigned on giving himself up to the work was more lucrative than any he held all through his after life.

He had not been long in the Eastbrook Circuit before he felt that the enormous debt on the Chapel property (£8,000) was a serious burden, and, foreseeing that it might, in case the wealthy members of the Church were to remove or die, prove a formidable obstruction at some future day to the progress of the work of God, he set himself to lessen it, and by his diligent prosecution of the scheme, with the aid of the leading friends, the debt was reduced to £3,000. Considerable arrears also in the accounts of the several charitable funds raised in the circuit were cleared off at the same time.

It was a task of some difficulty to get one of the chapel trusts duly arranged, after the serious loss caused by the division of 50 and 51; but with his usual diligence and good business tact, Mr. Vasey accomplished it to the satisfaction and advantage of the circuit.

The Local Preachers found Mr. Vasey a wise counsellor and a true friend. He would talk freely upon styles of preaching with them, as a colleague in the same work; would discuss texts and freely give advice as to the so-called divisions of a subject. And no wonder he felt and acted thus: for we have heard him say that the sermons he made when a local preacher were his best in earnestness and power; and that he would bring out and furbish up one of these in the later years of his life when he wished to produce some special effect.

In fact, it was not Mr. Vasey's habit to perform the duties of any office he held in a perfunctory way. Being when in Bradford secretary to the Woodhouse Grove School Committee, he took a lively interest in what was going on, and frequently visited it. On such occasions he would ask to see any master who had been recently appointed, talk with him about the difficulties of his work, and the few kind words of sympathy and encouragement bestowed were felt by them to be of real service, and are gratefully remembered to this day.

The impression left in the homes of our people by Mr. Vasey's visits was one becoming a Christian Minister. The members of the families where he stayed, felt that he was a man of God, and that his work was to lead them to the Saviour and the Church. He was, however, eminently cheerful in his social intercourse, hopeful in his views of things, and in his own experience and example showed that the holy is the truly happy life. The whole of the household were noticed by him in their turn. He had a kind word for the servants, gave practical proof on leaving that he was grateful for their attentions, and never failed earnestly to commend them to God at family prayer.

This leads me naturally to remark, how indefatigable he was in the pastoral oversight of the flock. Lists of the members, with the streets and numbers of their residences, he desired to have furnished

by the leaders on coming into the circuit; but to his surprise some of these good men objected strongly, and refused, because they thought, as many of the members were in somewhat humble life, a call at any moment would be inconvenient. This did not, however, deter Mr. Vasey from his purpose. He sought the people out himself: would call when other duties allowed, at any hour; and if he found (as he often did), the house in confusion, through the weekly washing or baking, he would kneel with the family and offer a few words of prayer.

A few remarks may be added as to the impression left of his pulpit powers. In preaching he was distinguished by a marked fidelity, and a deep sense of his responsibility to Christ. In those evangelical truths, which it has been the habit of our Church to put most prominently forward he delighted, and they were the sum and substance of his teaching. The application of these was made more interesting and enforced by anecdotes of what he had seen in his own observation and ministry. The main feature in this part of his work, was a desire for immediate results in the clear conversion of souls, and a holy ambition to attain to the unction and success by which the first Methodist ministers were distinguished.

A course of sermons upon the letters to the seven Churches, produced a deep, and in many cases a lasting impression. The main point that struck the writer, was the vivid manner in which Mr. Vasey read the spirit of these letters, how he put forward forcibly their lessons and warnings, as applicable to the same errors and evils in his own day; and the specially reverent faith which recognised Jesus Christ as holding the same sovereign power in the Church now as then, and even in Providence, as by His truth and Spirit, rebuking and correcting the sins of His people. The cast of thought in Dr. Trench's notes on that part of Scripture, which were published many years after; by the similarity forcibly recalled to our minds the impressions that course of sermons produced.

These were by no means the only sermons which were a lasting benefit to the people. On other subjects he was truly great in his large views of truth. Thus there are worthy of special notice the sermon on "saving to the uttermost," another on "My God shall supply all your need," a third on "Peace the effect of righteousness," and the earnestness of his appeals in preaching from the prodigal son, was such as almost to overtax his strength.

On one occasion, when he feared that his wife's affliction might prove fatal any hour, he asked her before going to Eastbrook Chapel what text he must take. She replied, "My grace is sufficient for thee," which he did, and spoke from that passage with such power and feeling, that the sermon is usually spoken of by those who heard it whenever reference is made to Mr. Vasey's ministry.

It may be added, he was never known to miss an appointment in the circuit through Mrs. Vasey's illness; a remark which may be fitly made here in recollections of Bradford, as it was there that illness first took a serious form. The officers of the Eastbrook Chapel gratefully record his fidelity to his pulpit duties in spite of the disadvantages of that affliction.

He was, finally, "in season and out of season." He was specially

fond of out-door preaching. Even when at Eastbrook morning and evening, he would preach in the market-place in the afternoon. The leading members of the Church, however unwilling, were pressed into the service, and forced, by his godly earnestness, to stand at his side as helpers in this work.

He was never more in his element than at the prayer meeting after evening service, longing for immediate results, and pained in his heart, unless Sunday after Sunday he saw direct fruit of his ministry in the conversion of souls to God, and in many very striking instances he was favoured to see of the travail of his soul at Eastbrook, one may be mentioned.

A person came in one Sunday evening, and stood in the aisle. When offered a seat he declined it, but remained to the close of the service. At the prayer meeting he went forward, and stood some time at the communion rail, and at length knelt with others seeking salvation, and found peace before he left the chapel. He confessed afterwards that he had left home with the intention of committing suicide, but the Word arrested him, broke his heart, and led him there and then to Christ. And ever since that memorable night he has retained his peace with God.

It may be asked had our dear friend no faults. As a man truly he had. We have not, however, been led in writing to think how far he fell short of the perfection of an angel, but, to what extent his presence and ministry were to us, a help and a blessing. For that we thank God, and trust that this and the next age may see numbers of men as earnest, as godly, gifted with a nobleness as simple-hearted and pure, raised up to adorn and edify the Church.

In a long and happy intercourse with him we never noticed any other failing, than at times, from his intense abhorrence of anything mean and sinful, a strength of expression which might seem somewhat caustic and severe. But those who knew him best knew well that he had a tender and true heart; and the stern virtue, which is somewhat outspoken in rebuke and warning, may be forgiven, and even welcomed, in a lax age.

The added notes testify to Mr. Vasey's usefulnes amongst the Society worshipping at Dudley Hill.

Previous to the disruption of 1849, &c., in the Methodist Connexion, the Society at Dudley Hill was strong and flourishing, the congregations excellent, all the sittings in the chapel were let, new applicants had to wait a considerable time before they could be accommodated, and the Sunday-school, which was large, was crowded with scholars. But the storm before alluded to left the cause here almost an entire wreck, so that in 1854, when Mr. Vasey came to the Eastbrook Circuit, he found at Dudley Hill onlya small and feeble Society, a great many empty pews to preach to, no Sunday-school, and the chapel premises in a very dilapidated condition, no repairs having been done for years. Mr. Vasey was not the man to allow such a state of things to connue. He saw what was needed, at once set about the task of reconstruction, and by the end of his first year the chapel, which had been closed for several weeks, was reopened, fitted with new warming

apparatus, gas sunlight, &c., in place of oil-lamps, the whole of the body of the chapel remodelled, a new gallery for the singers, and an organ placed in it. The broken-down boundary walls of the burial ground rebuilt, large new iron gates and palisading, erected in front of the chapel, a new causeway made, and a new trust prepared and completed under the model deed.

Mr. Vasey's great business tact enabled him to carry out these improvements in a comparatively short time after his coming into the circuit. The congregation soon became larger, and the Society, which for years had been dispirited, began a career of prosperity which has continued to the present time. The Society was also greatly benefited by Mr. Vasey's pastoral labours. He very much excelled in this often neglected, but highly important, department of ministerial duty—possessing a quick insight into the character of the persons with whom he came in contact. He could readily interest them by his free style of conversation, always instructive and profitable, and invariably followed by a short impressive prayer. His visits, *especially to the sick*, were highly valued.

His sermons possessed great charms for the more critical and inquiring minds of the congregation. Delivered in his solemn and earnest manner, they were accompanied by great power, and were instrumental in many being led to Christ.

Mr. Vasey did a wonderful amount of hard work for the cause at Dudley Hill, which none but those who were associated with him in the work, and were acquainted with the difficulties he overcame, can estimate at its true value. On his leaving the circuit, the friends here presented him with a pocket communion service, as a small token of their esteem, admiration, and love.

CHAPTER IX.

LEEDS FIRST (BRUNSWICK) CIRCUIT.

NEVER was welcome more hearty than was accorded to Mr. Vasey and his family on their arrival at their new residence, they were speedily at home, and in the full vigour of heart and intellect he commenced his labours in the Leeds First (Brunswick) Circuit, having for his colleagues the Rev. Alfred Barrett, Superintendent, and the Rev. E. J. Robinson, third minister.

Mr. Vasey was still amidst a manufacturing population, and in the very heart of Methodism; and he opened his commission at Brunswick with unrestrained freedom, selecting such subjects in his pulpit ministrations as were likely to prove edifying to the Church. His series of discourses on the messages to the Seven Churches in Asia were soon into use, and though perhaps not at Brunswick producing such powerful results as at Bradford East, yet were they preached to the interest and edification of many of his hearers, and their effects remain unto this day in their hearts and lives.

And soon he was in full swing of circuit services; happy in his work and in intercourse with the society to which the change had introduced him, yet not forgetful of the claims of old friends; but gladly welcoming their visits and always ready with a few lines of congratulation or sympathy as their circumstances might demand. The following characteristic letter was addressed to a young friend who had recently become the wife of a Wesleyan minister:—

Leeds, November 9th, 1867.

MY DEAR JULIA,

Though late and it may be last in the list of your friends who have acknowledged your wedding cards, I am not least in the sincerity and warmth of my congratulations on the event of your marriage. I was right glad to hear that you were going to be married to a Methodist preacher, for I think it the highest style of life, either for men or women; and more especially that you were going to enter a family so thoroughly Wesleyan, and otherwise estimable for strength of principle and character as that of your husband. My best wishes attend you both, and my hopes go along with my wishes, for I think you have the prospect of as much happiness as falls to the lot of most young people. Whether you have got a good husband or not, you are the best judge; but I feel pretty certain that he has got a jewel of a wife, and though I may congratulate him on his good fortune, I cannot give him any particular credit for discernment, when the merits were so obvious. And now, Julia, you are looking for a bit of advice, and here it is: you are to be a first-rate preacher's wife, and a model to all young people, and you will accomplish this best by being just what you are, and nothing else. You have no need to settle down into a tame, demure, or spiritless thing because you are married; but to preserve your own originality, which in the end will always carry you through. In this respect, you cannot have a better model than your own mother. And for all that you need to carry you through the unknown future of this changeful and chequered life, you may rely fully on the grace of a covenant-keeping God.

May His blessing be upon you. My wife joins in love.

Yours, affectionately,

THOMAS VASEY.

Christmas proved a very happy one in the domestic circle. The customary "Tree" was raised in mamma's room, ministering as much pleasure to "dada" as to the children. A day or two afterwards, a deputation with humble mien ("dada" being at the head), waited upon mamma, bearing a petition, properly drawn and signed, which was presented in due form, praying, that if it might please her majesty, the turkey in the larder might be served on the morrow. In this manner did Mr. Vasey identify himself with the sports of his children, making a diversion at all opportunities. His presence in the nursery acted not as a check to their merriment, but as a signal for an increase of it. At such times, a favourite pastime with the children was to raise a fortress, and with bold front, and armed, not with firearms, but

fire irons, the defenders would sally forth and invite an attack. There was, however, a speedy reversion when the advancing foe, "dada," alone and unarmed, charging right and left compelled a retreat, with loss of arms, amid bursts of laughter.

At the Conference of 1858, the question of a successor to the Rev. Alfred Barrett being discussed, it was considered expedient to appoint Mr. Vasey to the office of Superintendent of the Leeds First Circuit. This course was opposed by many of the leading men, under a misapprehension of his character, and Mr. Vasey himself strongly objected to the appointment, desiring to remain free from the cares of the superintendency as long as possible. He thus expressed himself in reference to this matter in a letter to his wife, dated Hull, July 27th, 1858:—"I feel a good deal under this serious aspect of affairs, as I see, however much I may oppose it, I shall probably have to submit at last; and it will be a great addition to my anxieties. However, if it must be so, the W. H. Grove secretaryship must be given up, at least; and I must also curtail, if not altogether give up, extra parochial services. I must say, my regret is stronger, the more near and real the danger seems to be, and I shall feel called upon to do all in my power to avert it. Let me have your advice on the subject."

Again, Hull Conference, 10th August:—"We have had nothing but stations to-day, and a very exciting time it has been; not to me particularly, but to many of the brethren; and we can hardly help being infected with the general spirit. When Leeds First was read, I spoke up and said, 'Mr. President, I am sorry to occupy the time of the Conference with a merely personal question, but I entertain a strong objection to occupy the position of a superintendent anywhere; but especially in such a circuit as Leeds First, and I should be very glad if some other minister could be appointed, and would render him all the assistance in my power.' This was met by loud cries from all parts of the Conference, 'Go on,' so that it must be considered as fixed; and my only consolation

is, that the appointment is made by a very general concurrence of opinion, both in the stationing committee and out of it. We are now busy choosing chairmen, which is a time of great confusion, and I have just got it finely. With a view to save the time of the Conference, I ventured to suggest that only the names of superintendents should be called out, for it is the practice to read over all the names of preachers, though no one would think of making a man a chairman who was not a superintendent; upon which some one suggested that this hint came very suspiciously from a young superintendent, and turned the laugh of the Conference on me for about two minutes."

He returned from Conference, and at the time appointed assumed the position of Superintendent. Probably the opposition to his appointment to the office arose from the idea (which perhaps his independent bearing favoured), that his course would be *ipse dixit;* carrying everything with a high hand, without reference to the wishes or views of others. The contrary, however, proved the case, throughout the whole of Mr. Vasey's career as a Superintendent. Though unflinching in the maintenance of discipline, and ever holding the reins with a firm hand in circuit meetings, &c., he allowed full latitude for discussion, and the expression of opinion; and was accustomed to consult freely with his fellow-labourers, both amongst ministers and laymen.

We venture to think, that few men on becoming superintendents have been more fully qualified for the office than was Mr. Vasey. Though utterly unsectarian in spirit, he was cordially attached to his own religious denomination—with its doctrines he agreed heart and soul—he had a thorough knowledge of its polity and discipline, and was a perfect financier. Hence, he entered into the details of circuit life and business with ease and efficiency. But though always anxious to promote the outward prosperity of his circuit, and rejoicing when the quarterly schedule showed an increase of members, his chief solicitude was to preserve spiritual purity and

vigour in the Church; thus ensuring stability to the structure; and leaving each circuit, not only with the external signs of improvement and progress, but increased in vital power, and hence prepared for a continued course of prosperity and usefulness.

The position of Superintendent secured to Mr. Vasey the opportunity for the more extensive use of a talent, of which he was not slow to avail himself. He was not only a diligent hard-worker himself, but he had the discernment to discover this power in others, and skill to bring it into exercise for his Master's glory. His own spirit of zeal and enterprise was infused into all with whom he came in contact in the management of the affairs of his circuit. All fellow-labourers, whether colleagues in the ministry, local preachers, class or prayer leaders, Sunday-school teachers, tract distributors, &c.—if sincere in their devotion—caught some degree of his fire, and by this means the work of God grew and prospered wherever he went.

With his increased burden of responsibility, Mr. Vasey did not abate his labours in the smallest degree. As the only means of securing the hearing of a certain class of people, he continued to preach in the open air, and on one of these occasions, when in Leeds, addressed working men on the obligations of the Christian Sabbath.

Mr. Vasey himself was strict in his observance of the Lord's Day. No matter how distant might be his appointment, he would not resort to the use of the rail or omnibus; and should he through illness be compelled to take a cab, if he would not miss an appointment, he invariably secured an opportunity to the driver to attend the service. In his own home also, in the intervals of public worship, the hours were employed as befitted the sanctity of the day. Servants were not required for any work not absolutely needful, and a little dessert was always provided after dinner to the children, on the principle that the day should be associated in their minds with increased privileges and happiness.

The approach of winter brought an increase of

domestic anxieties. The old enemy of the children (bronchitis) attacked several of them in a more severe form than ever previously, and for some weeks two were confined to the room of their invalid mother. And though there was an improvement in this respect before Christmas, and they were able to indulge in the accustomed little family festivities, yet was it not so joyous a season as usual. It might be, that the prospect of a speedily diminished circle (it being arranged that Mary Jane, the eldest child of the family, should go to London for education at the close of the Christmas holidays), had cast a shade of sadness over the group. Certainly the thought that two of that household band would be mourned amongst the absent and the departed at the return of that happy season did not intrude. Mary Jane had, for some months past, had her studies interrupted by delicate health, and the family medical adviser (the late respected Mr. Morley) had recommended her being sent to the south. It was afterwards remembered how she, on leaving, returned again and again to take another kiss and to say good-bye once more to the home to which she was never to return. She was accompanied to town by her father, who, after his return to Leeds, addressed to her the following letter:—

Leeds, 31*st January*, 1859.

My dear Child,

I hope by this time you are quite settled in your new sphere of duty, and that your sorrow has been only like the passing cloud and shower which we have had here the last day or two, with intervals of light and sunshine. You are very young to be called to leave home and go amongst strangers; but it seems necessary that it should be so, and though for the present it may be a trial to you, I hope that ultimately it may prove a blessing. It is, however, only the commencement of a course of events that will in all probability characterise the greater part of your life, in which you will have to make sacrifices of your own will and your own feeling, and it is well that you should be prepared to meet them in a right spirit. You will require submission to the will of God, and trust in His providential care; and with these two things, you may get well through all the trials of life. These dispositions, though contrary to our own nature, may be obtained from God in answer to prayer, and by means of the influences of the Holy Spirit, and I hope you will earnestly seek them. I have great hope that your abode at Miss Aver's will be of

great advantage to you in every way, and I have every confidence in you, that you will try to make the best of your advantages. We think and speak a great deal about you, and pray daily for you. I hope you will pray earnestly for your conversion, and that you will also form the habit of prayer to God about everything. You will find relief if you are dull, and strength for duty and trial if you do this, and you need never be solitary if God is with you.

This is mamma's birthday; you must not forget when you write to wish her many happy returns of it. We all unite in love to you, and hoping to hear from you on Thursday,

I am, my darling girl,
Your affectionate father,
THOMAS VASEY.

The new year had been inaugurated with a remarkably solemn and profitable covenant service, and a series of special services; and from month to month Mr. Vasey's course was one of unsparing effort for the welfare of his circuit, country places sharing with the circuit town in his careful attention. It was not always smooth sailing. Not seldom he had painful exercises of mind in the discharge of what he believed to be his duty, and much nervous depression was the result, so that sleep often departed from him. But, with the testimony of a good conscience, he held on his way, disarming prejudice, and winning the respect of all good people.

Notwithstanding the increase of circuit service, Mr. Vasey remained in the office of secretary to the Committee of Woodhouse Grove, and as a member of several Connexional committees, continued to serve his own denomination generally. Nor did he withhold his aid from other circuits, and he likewise took his fair share in deputation work.

We find him, in the spring of 1859, engaged in the advocacy of Wesleyan missions in the Liverpool district; and that he was an efficient speaker, and an agreeable companion on these occasions, is testified by the late Rev. John Gostick, who wrote, shortly before his own lamented decease :—" My acquaintance with Mr. Vasey was only a limited, but a very happy one. We once went on a missionary deputation together, and I have lasting memories of his wonderfully facile copious speeches,

and of his generous enthusiastic spirit in private as well as in public intercourse."

Mr. Vasey himself greatly enjoyed the opportunities which these occasions afforded him of extended usefulness and of happy intercourse with the Methodist people, but he always rejoiced when he could turn his face homewards again. He had a keen appreciation of home comforts and joys. In all his tastes, habits, and feelings, he was thoroughly domestic. "Home, sweet home" was to him the most attractive place upon earth, so that when absent he would, like a schoolboy, count the days until his return.

And he, the honoured and beloved head, the life and stay of that happy household, how was his presence missed during his absences, and how did his children troop to welcome him on his return.

We have now the painful duty to record the deepest sorrow of Mr. Vasey's life. In May, 1859, a dark cloud gathered over his home, and after hanging threateningly for some weeks, burst with overwhelming violence, in its descent sweeping into the grave the first-born and the youngest of the family. There had been previously great glee in the prospect of "Sissy's" return for the vacation. But one day in this month Arthur went to his mamma and asked when he should go to heaven; if he should go the next day; and afterwards he was heard saying to his little sister, "Lillie, I am going to heaven, and I shall never, never come back any more;" adding, "they never cry in heaven, but they are always singing." On his mamma's inquiring, "and what would you sing, Arthur, if you went to heaven?" "Oh," he replied, "I should sing 'Glory, honour!" Within a few days, the second daughter of the family too was seized with scarlet fever, and when recovering, Arthur was taken ill of inflammation of the brain, supposed to be the result of suppressed scarlatina. The course of the disease was rapid, and at the end of forty hours he had gone to join the thousands of children who "around the throne of God, in heaven" sing "Glory, glory, glory!"

No sooner was Arthur laid in his last bed, than the two elder boys of the family took the fever, and the work of watching becoming more heavy, the services of a nurse from the Fever Hospital were secured. Meanwhile the Midsummer holidays approached, and it not being deemed prudent to bring Mary Jane home, she was sent to the house of a relative. At length, to her great joy, she was summoned to join the family at Harrogate, whither they were gone for change of air. But no sooner had she arrived than she too sickened, and after a fortnight's hard struggling with disease, fell into that mortal slumber which only the sound of the last trumpet can disturb.

This, to her parents, was an almost overwhelming stroke. Mary Jane, as the first-born of the family, was tenderly beloved. She had been instructed with special pains; she had early given indications of great mental activity; and was of a most unselfish disposition. Though so young, she had ever used great influence for good over her younger brothers and sister, and had made such unusual proficiency at her studies as to give promise of being a superior woman. In the midst of this deep sorrow her parents were not, however, without strong consolation. The sudden removal of the youngest had resulted in the conversion of the eldest of the family, and death found her prepared. After she had ceased to recognise earthly objects, her father, observing on her face an expression of mingled delight, wonder, and solemnity, inquired, "What do you see, my darling?" The reply was, "cherubim and seraphim!" Her last words were, "Jesus is my strength for ever."

But though this blow came upon Mr. Vasey with such crushing weight, on the Sunday succeeding the death of his child, he held an out-door service in the "Stray," at Harrogate; and on the following Sabbath in his own pulpit, in Leeds, made such touching allusions to his late loss as deeply affected his congregation. Notwithstanding, however, that he did not indulge in a murmuring spirit, with regard to the death of his children, nor

wished their return, he could not for many months either think or speak of them without emotion; and though, with the lapse of time, the edge of his sorrow became less keen, it remained as a chastening influence during the whole of his after life. He had a strong impression that "Sissy" was often with him in the pulpit, and on more than one occasion, he was so assured of her presence that he addressed her.

This trial also resulted in a severe attack of nervous exhaustion, and a change of scene being thought desirable his old friend (Mr. Duncan) kindly took him to the Isle of Wight. In the enjoyment of such congenial society, and in visiting places of interest and beauty, Mr. Vasey derived refreshment to his spirits, and returning to his circuit, plunged into his work with renewed strength and purpose. At the commencement of 1860, he was engaged in connection with his fellow-labourers, in a series of special services, which were more than ordinarily successful. Mr. Vasey did not on this occasion merely continue in prayer with penitents until a late hour at the chapel, but he would engage in pleading with them for mercy in his own study after the public services were concluded.

No sooner, however, had he fairly entered upon the new year, when he had an attack of illness in a much more severe and disabling form. This was probably the first development of that insidious disease to which Mr. Vasey, at length, succumbed, after heroically struggling against it for years.

He vainly attempted, on this its first appearance, to continue at his post of labour, but was obliged to yield to the advice of his medical advisers. And the Brunswick friends generously providing him a supply for three months, and the means to undertake a voyage to a warmer climate which was thought necessary, he decided upon taking a tour to Egypt, and embarked for that country, March 27th, 1860.

Mr. Vasey wrote a daily journal during his six week's absence from home, extracts of which we supply for the information and interest of the reader.

On board the *Euxine*. Southampton, Tuesday, March 27th, 1860. Steamed out of the Docks at 2 p.m. My fellow berthmate, a Scotchman, very sensible and communicative; I believe he goes no further than Gibraltar, so that unless we ship more passengers there, I may reign alone in my little palace.

March 29th.—Tried to do some good to the sailors, and especially to the boys, of whom there are a good many on board. Prepared and sorted for distribution a number of tracts kindly furnished by Mr. Duncan. My voice is still weak and I cough a little. Am trying to keep my soul alive to God, and find His Word peculiarly precious as I always do when thrown upon it as my only resource. Have not forgotten the appointed hour with my dear wife either yesterday or to-day.

Friday, 30th.—Have been refreshed this morning by Scripture reading. How often the sea is introduced into the imagery of the Psalms, and what a peculiar significance the allusions to it have when it is actually spread out before us. "Let the sea roar and the fulness thereof." How it takes off from all that is fearful and disagreeable to realize the fact that the noise of its heaving waves and surges constitutes its contribution to the choral song of universal nature.

Sunday, April 1st.—At 10 o'clock held service in the saloon, respectable muster. Captain read prayers with a good loud voice—clear articulation and serious manner—everything very devout und decorous—no sermon for myself; my thoughts were at home, and my feelings so moved that I could scarcely avoid shedding tears. By the bye my nervous system is exceedingly relaxed and I have not yet been able to take the cold bath owing to the weather. Spent the afternoon in trying to do some good to the boys and men on board. Found that there were upwards of seventy including stewards. Began with the boys—got them into a little cabin and exhorted them to begin to pray—was very much pleased with them, and gave them each a copy of "Band of Hope Review," and a tract by Newton, addressed to young sailors. Afterwards gave a tract each to all that were sitting about the forecastle, and sent to each of the twelve engineers that were off shift, a copy of the "British Workman." Fairly tired myself out with the exertion, but felt tsatisfied that some good mus come of it. Made special prayer for each case, and especially asked in faith for some of the souls of this ship's company to be given to me. After dinner retired to my berth; it being about 6 o'clock, called up to my mind Brunswick Chapel, and congregation, prayed earnestly for them—called at the house across the street, and entered a certain room in which were Lillie and her mamma, and if ideas are facts kissed them both, and then returned on board the *Euxine*. Being determined to have some solitude, muffled myself up, mounted my water-proof coat and cap, and paced the bridge of the steamer in the rain, communing with the absent and the departed—sung over "Glory, honour," and the German Evening Hymn in memory of the latter—came down to tea and passed the time till 10, reading, thinking, &c., after which I retired to rest.

On Monday, April 2nd, 1860, the ship came in sight of the Rock of Gibraltar, at which most of the passengers landed, and spent a few hours in examining the town and

fortifications. Mr. Vasey's description of each (particularly the latter) is extremely vivid and interesting, and we regret not having space to insert even extracts from it. The visit occasioned him both pleasure and refreshment. On the following day, Tuesday, April 3rd, he writes :—

Spent one of the most refreshing nights I have had at sea. Took my first bath this morning. Imagine it: it was the water whisked out by the paddles, flowing in over your body and out again as fast, after gaining a certain depth at the other end, as cold as ice in the heat of the sun, fresh, clear as crystal, and flowing always; enjoyed under cover; what could a Mahommedan desire in Paradise better than this? I see my way clear, and, thank God, to healed lungs and braced nerves. This consideration makes me take strong hold of my beloved work, and made me feel this morning, while in the bath, as if I was preaching at Brunswick Chapel. This is the thing which gives me more happiness than any merely pleasurable sensation of a physical kind. . . .

Wednesday, 4th April, 1860.—Up this morning at half-past seven o'clock; found that my watch was four minutes slow, and that we had at length made some east longitude. We went as far as forty minutes west of Greenwich, but I never altered my watch, and do not intend to do so, as I wish to think of what is doing at home, and especially to keep my assignation, at the Throne of Grace, with her my heart loves most of earth-born creatures. . . . After dinner (say 5.30 to 7), the scene was most fascinating. The sky clear, the water smooth, the sun setting, and the full moon rising, created a combination of colours and shades most delightful to the eye.

The western part of the sea presented a blending of purple, gold, and silver, most gorgeous and dazzling, while the eastern, over which the pale moon predominated, looked as if it were clothed in Quaker garb, and demurely rebuking the vanity and display of the other half. Altogether, it was a mingling of bright and sombre, serious and gay, light and shadow, such as life itself presents to one who looks back upon it from the shady side of forty. And as, of course, the bright golden flush passed away, and left the pensive moonlight, it seemed admonitory, and taught that notwithstanding all the temporary glare and glitter by which we are sometimes surrounded, those things only abide permanently with us which bear reflecting upon as to the past, and which minister hope for the future. Felt my heart overflow with gratitude to God, and with tender affection towards one whom I should have liked to have beside me to share my gratification. Am endeavouring to get an opportunity of talking closely and religiously to some one or other of my fellow-voyagers. Last night had a good opportunity with two men at the wheel, with whom I conversed at length, and met their objections by arguments drawn from their employment in steering, in a way which seemed to impress them. I pray God it may be for their good. One of the boys was sixteen years of age yesterday, and I wished him many happy returns of the day, and gave him some good advice, and a shilling. To-day at sea.

Twice had a very good opportunity of speaking to an old Indian captain, who has been talking very bitterly against religion, and, indeed, seems a perfect misanthropist. I had occasion to take him up last night before all the company, in a mild and somewhat dignified manner, which appeared to give general satisfaction. I have all to-day spoken very kindly to him, and so far won his confidence, that he opened out to me his history. . . . Poor fellow, he wept as he told me his sad tale, and from my heart I pitied him, and spoke to him as tenderly as possible, exhorting him to seek help and comfort in God. This conversation, which was overheard by several at our end of the table, will, I hope, do good. I intend to pray specially for the poor old man.

By the bye, I am rather surprised at the general respect and deference paid to me here. My conversation is sought, and my opinion asked on many points which I should not have expected, and I consider this influence as an answer to prayer, and as a talent for the right use of which I shall be responsible. I have from the first felt my need of special grace, and have daily sought it, and I trust in some measure, received it. Glory be to God. . . .

Thursday, April 5th, 1860.—Have just been thinking that I had not yet spent a quarter of my time, and my log has grown so voluminous, that if I go on at this rate, it will swell to the size of a small volume. Yet I suppose it will find at least one interested reader, to whom scarcely any details will be superfluous, and the pleasure of writing it for her is the brightest, next to actual conversation, which the narrator can enjoy. Indeed, half the pleasure of seeing things is in the idea of communicating them; and it is a plain fact that the eye would soon cease to look, if neither the tongue nor the pen were permitted to talk. . . . Had some more talk with my poor old Indian to-night. . . . I spoke to him pointedly about religion, and found him armed to the teeth in self-righteousness: must keep to him and pray for the illumination of the Holy Spirit to be given to him. . . .

Good Friday, 6th April, 1860.— . . . Their being small signs of recognition of this day on board this ship, I have endeavoured to commemorate, as well as I could by myself, that great event by which the world has been so greatly influenced, and is to be still more powerfully pervaded. What a mercy it is that we have known and believed the love which God hath given to us! Upon that precious sacrifice I do rely with all my heart; "other refuge have I none;" and when I think that I have a father, mother, brother, and three children actually saved through it, can I refrain from praising God? I join blessed little Arthur in singing,

> "Glory, honour, praise, and power
> Be unto the Lamb for ever!" . . .

Sunday, 8th April, 1860.— . . . The *Euxine* ought to have reached Malta at least by two o'clock on Saturday afternoon, and the failure to do so has involved the following serious inconveniences: 1. Prevented me from buying some things that I wanted, especially English newspapers, and a book or two. 2. Prevented me from getting my belt shortened, which will greatly inconvenience me at Alexandria, as

I shall be unable to wear it. 3. Deprived me of the opportunity of getting some information about Alexandria, and the French steamboats, and probably an introduction to some Methodist family there. 4. Missed the Marseilles mail, which left Saturday atternoon. . . . 5. Occasioned a great deal of Sabbath-breaking to the passengers who went on shore, lowering the reputation of the English for religion, and causing them to occupy the sacred hours of the Lord's Day in reading newspapers, discussing their contents, and recounting their bargains on shore. 6. Deprived of all public worship on board, the men having been up all night and being busy washing the ship down, on which account I had no opportunity of going about amongst them as on the previous Sunday, for religious conversation and tract distribution. Mourned over these things very much, and feeling a good deal of pain in my chest, gave way, I fear, sinfully to a desponding state, and began to create all sorts of dismal phantoms of the imagination, but roused myself to take part in the worship of Brunswick Chapel (the time here an hour and a half before England), having first just stepped across to see the boys get ready for chapel, and their mamma adjusting their collars, after which she settled down for a little sleep; and my friend Ishmael Jones gave out his hymn. After finishing the sermon at a quarter past twelve (English time) I retired to my cabin, and went through the Church service, endeavouring, with much success, to get my heart lifted up to the glorious fact of the resurrection of my Lord and Saviour from the dead. . . . Retired to rest early; lay awake conjuring up, as I cannot help doing when I am otherwise depressed, all the dreary recollections of the illness and death of my dear children. Put them to flight by singing in my mind "Glory, honour," "My Shepherd shall supply," "How do Thy mercies," &c. Got a view of them in glory, and then fell asleep.

The records of the next few days refer to personal occupation and experiences principally. But when nearing the end of the voyage, Mr. Vasey wrote the following little note to his wife, dated

"Ship *Euxine*, near Alexandria, April 11th, 1860.

. . . As we shall probably be in Alexandria by 7 o'clock to-morrow morning, and may possibly catch a Marseilles boat coming out of the harbour as we go in, I get my log and letter ready to-night. It is a comfort to me to write to you, but I do long for the greater comfort of hearing from you. It does indeed require great fortitude to be so long without news from home, considering the state in which I left you; and the only thing that I reflect upon with pleasure is, that I have been able to embrace every opportunity of writing to you, and that the heavy end of this trial rests upon me, who ought to be so much more able to bear it with all my advantages here. I should be fearfully miserable if I had not a remedy at hand in prayer, but I do feel a comfort in this, and often feel as if I had real communication with you at the appointed hour. I find myself much improved, and expect the change to the dry climate of Egypt will be further bene-

ficial. Am as yet quite in the dark as to my future route, but I will let you know as soon as I can see my way. I have pictured you all very happy together during the Easter holidays, which I suppose will now be over. A thousand blessings attend you, my dearest girl. . . .

Thursday, 12th April, 1860.—Zech's Hotel, Alexandria.—Here my contemplative life of the last fortnight is fairly at an end, and a fortnight of bustle and excitement lies before me. . . . Breakfasted at 8 o'clock, and then all bustle and preparation for landing. At 9 a steamer from the railway came alongside, and I availed myself of it to go to the station, where I saw my fellow passengers start for Suez, and having given them a few books out of the stock, Mr. Duncan supplied me with, to beguile the journey, I bade them good-bye. . . . The train moved in very good style, and I felt very lonely when it was out of sight. However, there was no help for it, so I engaged two donkeys, on one of which I mounted my luggage, and on the other my person. These donkeys are queer little things, and queerly accoutred, but as they form the principal means of locomotion in Egypt, you cannot dispense with them. The saddles consist simply of a pad with a high hunch in front, very needful for the rider, for they sometimes kick a good deal, and then break off into a gallop or canter, which tests the horsemanship of the rider. . . . The stirrups are long, and unfortunately are not attached to the saddle, but swing over from the top, so that on a sudden turn you are liable to find one leg half a yard longer than the other. Having got, however, put up to all these peculiarities on the voyage, and heard sundry tales of unfortunate novices being pitched off, I was prepared, and though nervous at first, managed so well, that as we rode into the grand square, I was rather proud of my horsemanship (if you will excuse this term in connection with an ass), and dismounted at the door of the hotel with an air of triumph. It is one of the oddest scenes you can imagine, to see the crowd of boys with their donkeys, pushing one another about to get the preference. The moment you have made your choice, you must bid the rest off with an air of authority, and if you have a stick in your hand, it will have a salutary effect to hold it up in a menacing attitude. Strangers very frequently strike them on the head, but this is both cruel and unnecessary; and really the lads are such a cheerful-looking, willing set, that I would far rather pat them on the head than strike them. The moment your choice has been made, the poor beast you have selected becomes the object of a general malediction by the unsuccessful competitors, who have learned just enough English to shout "He's a kicker, sir;" "He's no good;" "He will not carry you, sir;" and sundry similar prophetic utterances, not at all pleasant to the feelings of a nervous rider. Your own boy exhausts all his eloquence to re-assure you, and snaps his fingers at his fellows, as he runs alongside you. The same shouts are repeated as you go along. Well, in due course we arrived at the hotel, and I met at the entrance a Mahommedan, who I found could speak English, and who assisted me in paying and discharging the boy. I was much taken with his appearance and manner. Learning he was a dragoman, or interpreter, or guide, and that he knew the place well, engaged him as a guide at 4s. per day; sent him off at once for my letters and papers. . . . Well, what do you think, in comes my drago-

man (his name is Mustapha) and brings me only a paper, with the assurance that there is no letter. What a disappointment. Still the handwriting of the address is all right, and I kiss it impromptu, as the only consolation I can get. You were well enough to direct the paper, but too ill to write a letter; that is the next conclusion. It was very well I had taken the precaution first thing on being left in the bedroom to get on to my knees, and ask my best friend above to come and visit me in it, that I might know that I had at least one companion, and had realised it too, or else my heart would have stagnated. However, shortly afterwards in comes my dragoman with a smile all over his face, which assured me at once that he was a good-hearted fellow, bringing the letter with many apologies that he had overlooked it. All right at last, and no little pleased with the contents; much admire your plan of writing a little every day. . . .

At 2 o'clock went out with Mustapha; called at the English Consulate for my passport. . . . Went next to the Red Sea and Telegraph Office; found Mr. Brunton a very nice man and chatted with him awhile. . . . Mr. B. sent one of his officials with me to the French Steamboat Office, and with his asssistance I at once arranged my route, which I give you herewith.

April 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th.—Alexandria.
April 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22nd.—Cairo.
April 23rd.—Alexandria again.
April 24th.—Sail to Malta, arriving on the 28th (early).
April 28th.—Spend day in Malta, leaving at 5 p.m.
April 30th.—Arrive at Messina, leaving same day.
May 1st.—Arrive at Naples, leave at 4 p.m.
May 2nd.—Touch at Civita Vecchia.
May 3rd.—Touch at Leghorn.
May 4th.—Touch at Genoa.
May 5th.—Touch at Marseilles.
May 7th or 8th.—Arrive in London.
May 9th.—At home, D.V.

. . . Went through the Bazaar; bought a map of the town; got my umbrella covered with white calico; bought a broad-brimmed straw hat, fit up with a white cotton turban, necessary here to avoid sunstroke. . . . Got to my hotel, tired out, at 6; dined; and after enjoying a short walk in the twilight, and making an appointment with Mustapha at 7 to-morrow morning, got to bed at 11. . . .

Friday, April 13th, 1860.—Oh dear me! I am so tired I can scarcely write; up this morning at 6; had not much sleep owing to the howling and barking of dogs; and the loud and unearthly voice of the muezzin calling the faithful to prayers, which they do at 12 p.m. and 3.30 a.m., besides three times during the day. By the bye, these dogs at night are as much an institution as the donkeys by day, and an ugly, villainous-looking breed these dogs are, half hyena in their appearance; they seem to arrogate to themselves a monopoly of the streets at night, and growl at you from every corner, so that it is not safe for you to go out after dark without a stout stick for self-defence, and they keep up a concert all over the city throughout the night. Well, set off with Mustapha and a couple of donkeys at half-past 6 for the catacombs; beautiful ride. . . . Arrived at the catacombs

wonderful places. . . . All these mouldering remains of the past pomp and pageantry of man close by the shore of the sea, which has looked on and watched them in the pride of life; listened to their songs of festive mirth; sung their funeral dirge, and now looks on at those who ransack their tombs, itself unchanging and alone. . . . Returned to breakfast a little after 9. . . . At 10.30 sallied out again; visited Pompey's Pillar. . . . Near it is an encampment of gypsies, the women of which seemed very anxious to tell me my fortune, but as it is already made, I did not comply. From thence to Cleopatra's Needle. . . . Returned to lunch at 12.

In describing Alexandria, Mr. Vasey says:—

The city lies low and, with the exception of a few minarets, Pompey's Pillar, and one or two public buildings, offers nothing very imposing from the sea. Imagination must supply the want of the coup d'œil by conjuring up all the ancient associations: the Pharoahs of Alexandria; the splendours of the Ptolemys; Cleopatra and Mark Antony; the schools and colleges of the first three Christian centuries; the ravages of the Turks and Saracens; the inextinguishable commerce of the East down to the last conflict between the French and British.

Mr. Vasey's description of the modern portion of the city, its public buildings, bazaars, shops, and people, is very interesting and graphic, and he closes by remarking:—

Many of the Arabs are fine-looking, with expressive features and high, intellectual foreheads; I cannot but think that they are destined to cut a figure in the world yet, and if they were to any extent brought under the influence of Christianity, might be susceptible of great improvement as a race. Their little children are almost invariably handsome and engaging in the highest degree. I can scarcely keep myself from going up to them and taking them in my arms. If possible, schools for them would be the nucleus of an important Christian influence. The idea of having 100 of them in a Sunday School, with their fine expressive features lighted up at the mention of Jesus, is indeed glorious. But I cannot find that there is any active Christian influence at work here. The American Mission seems the most operative of any. I was much affected at the British Consulate by seeing the luggage of a clergyman, the Rev. J. Lyde, who had come out here in an advanced stage of consumption and died. . . .

Sunday, April 15th, 1860.— . . . At 10 Mr. Brunton called for me and took me to the English church. . . . Enjoyed the Liturgy exceedingly; some very doctrinal points in it stood out in bold relief amidst the gross spiritual darkness of the people. What a green oasis in the surrounding desert. In such a place as this, if it were not for this form of sound words, the people would lose all ideas of religious truth. Whatever becomes of the question of forms of prayer and Liturgical Services at home, they are indispensable abroad, and I

I had no money about me, which was true, as I gave Mustapha £1 to pay everything with, and left all the rest of my money with the Maitre d'Hotel at Cairo. I even kept my watch out of sight for the fellows were so importunate and the generality of Englishmen so soft that they will follow a man for miles if they think he has anything to give them. As it was they threatened to kill the poor Dragoman, and actually snatched at his purse and knocked his money on the sand, picking up what they could catch. I was not with them when this occurred, and received no personal incivility from them whatever. I intended to have gone into the interior, but requiring rest, I waited awhile, and the above scene having occurred in the meanwhile—decided me not to venture into the heart of that dungeon in perfect darkness, and in such questionable company. I walked, however, to the entrance, and stood for some time examining the construction of it, which is remarkable. . . .

We greatly deplore that want of space prevents our insertion of Mr. Vasey's full description of the Pyramids, which is most graphic and striking. At the close he observes,

Thus ended one of the most interesting days I have ever spent, the memory of which will ever live in my mind, and, I hope, be fruitful of good results. Went very tired to bed, and should have slept, I think, if the whole town had been bombarded. By the bye, I understand the dogs of Cairo are quite as bad as those at Alexandria, but the situation of this hotel removes it from their noise. But I am told that the reason of this strange dog-barking both here and at Alexandria is the existence of a peculiar kind of organisation among these animals, who divide their habitations into districts, the bounds of which are so well defined, that if any single dog wanders ever so far over his boundary, he is set upon by the denizens of the invaded district, and is almost immediately torn to pieces. In his extremity, he utters a howl which all his own tribe respond to, running to his assistance, so that the boundary lines of the canine parishes are generally the scenes of a nocturnal border warfare such as distinguished the Lowlands of Scotland and their English neighbours.

Thursday, 19th April, 1860.—Went out at nine. Called on Mr. Leider, relating my adventures of yesterday, and getting instructions as to shopping, &c., went through the bazaars again, and made some purchases, much to my satisfaction.

Friday, 20th April, 1860.—I have decided to return to Alexandria D.V.) to-morrow morning, where I shall have the sea-breeze, and time to make the necessary arrangements for my passage. Notwithstanding the enjoyment I have had, and the benefit I have derived, I shall be truly thankful to commence my homeward journey. . . .

Called upon Mrs. Leider and took leave of her, receiving some very interesting relics as a memento of my visit. . . . Went to the citadel. Saw through the palace, the mosque, the stables of the Viceroy. Everything but the mosque very poor. . . .

Saturday morning, 21st April.—Got little sleep all night. Sand

storm very bad; roared among the trees, and brought the sand right into my bed through latticed windows and musquito curtains. It is time for me to take leave of Cairo. Felt glad this morning that I was about to set my face homewards, and that all my progress now will be in that direction. Poured out my thanksgiving to God for preserving me thus far, and prospering me on my way. . . . We had upon the whole a very pleasant journey; the motion of the train made a fine current of air, and by sitting quite still and bearing an occasional suffocating sensation, we got through to within twenty miles of Alexandria, when the cool sea-breeze met us like a blessed breath from Paradise, which extorted an exclamation of joy from all the passengers. The train was very full.

Sunday, 22nd April, 1860.—Woke up this morning at six, with a comfortable sense of refreshment, having had a sound sleep. Found the city all alive, flags flying, guns firing, and everyone dressed for a holiday. . . . Composed by reading, prayer, and meditation. Took a saunter out before breakfast to get a sight of the dear old sea, and to sniff the fresh cool breeze. . . . After breakfast, I sauntered by the seashore till church time, and went to the service. . . . Returned in time for lunch, then retired to my room, and gave myself up to meditation about home—knelt down about the time when I thought Mr. Farrar would be closing the service at Brunswick, and prayed that a pentecostal influence might descend on the congregation. Prayed for every place in the circuit by name, and then remembered my own dear wife and family. Sung over our Sabbath hymns, and remembered those belonging to me who have departed this life, and could not help thinking that possibly they might be nearer to me than even those who are still in the flesh. Went to Church again at 3 p.m.; went on to Mr. Brunton's and had some singing there, and then family worship. Was tempted to ask for Mary Jane's piece, "Weep not for me," and found that my weak point was touched, and before I could master my emotions burst into tears, which obliged me to explain. Felt the singing affect my throat very much, and this being the only test I had tried since last Sunday, did not show much improvement in the main point. In fact it is still dubious whether it will ever recover its tone. The two things together have made one feel rather melancholy, but hope after another good night's rest I shall be in better spirits. . . .

Monday, 23rd April, 1860.—Went to the French steamboat office to see that all was right for to-morrow, and to my great mortification learned that the clerk had misinformed me, and that the steamer which he had told me was to sail for Malta to-morrow has not yet arrived from Marseilles, and has to go on to Syria and return, which would keep me ten days waiting here. So in a moment my fine Italian fabric fell to the ground, and I had to make my plans over again. I find, however, that on Thursday, the 26th inst., I can have the choice of two P. and O. steamers, one of which comes to Southampton, and the other to Marseilles. On weighing the matter over I am inclined to accept this as providential, as I had taken every precaution in my power, and I really felt this heat so overpowering that to visit the Italian cities, though it would add to the interest of my tour, would probably do so at the expense of my health. I shall therefore take

In view of the enforced change, he had received as usual, numerous invitations to other fields of labour, but he had, as was his custom, accepted the first, viz., to the Ninth London, which had formed a part of his circuit nine years ago, Hackney being then the second place of importance in the Islington Circuit, but now occupying the position of head of the Ninth London, including Stoke Newington, Tottenham, Edmonton, and many other outlying places. The prospect of labouring amongst old friends was particularly agreeable to him; but to leave the society which had manifested such unremitting kindness towards himself and family during their sojourn in Leeds First, was to him and them a great trial. The genuine expressions of affection and of appreciation of his services as Superintendent received at the March Quarterly Meeting, had been most grateful to Mr. Vasey, and he had accepted, with very pleasurable emotions, a gold eye-glass, presented by the Thorner friends in token of their sense of the value of his attention to the interests of their day-school. And though far from feeling satisfied with the result of his labours in the Leeds First Circuit, he felt thankful for the measure of prosperity vouchsafed during his administration there.

That Mr. Vasey survives in the affections of the people of the Leeds First Circuit, and that the good effects of his ministrations have been permanent, is testified almost universally.

One who had frequent opportunities of seeing Mr. Vasey during his life in Leeds, writes as follows:—"I knew Mr. Vasey well during the three years that he travelled in the Leeds First Circuit—years which I am never likely to forget. I have been honoured with the friendship of many of our ministers, but no one ever exerted so strong an influence upon my life and character as did Mr. Vasey.

"From the first I was struck with the frankness and openness of his character. There was something genuine about it which seemed to compel equal frankness from those who were brought into contact with him. And,

besides this, there was a certain fearlessness of demeanour, a love of independence, which was a pleasant thing to see, especially for young men, who, generally timid themselves, admire boldness in others. He was always ready to avow his opinions; none the less, perhaps, if he happened to be in a minority, for there was a trace of Saxon combativeness about his undoubtedly Saxon nature. He thought, spoke, and acted with decision, promptly making up his mind on any question, and not very tolerant of those who, less clear-sighted than himself, or less impulsive, doubted, hesitated, debated, and hung back. His cheerfulness and buoyancy of character were very remarkable. Many sorrows mingled with his cup, but they left no bitterness, no trace of fretfulness or peevishness behind them. Nothing could drive the smile from his face, or the sparkle from his eye. He used to say that his spirit was naturally so buoyant that it needed some good heavy ballast to keep it steady; and that he should be a lost man but for his trials!

"His interest in young people was very great—not the merely pleasurable interest which youth everywhere creates for its own sake, and which is generally sentiment more or less superficial, but the interest which is born of genuine anxiety. I have good reason to know what was his affectionate care, his watchful and long continued oversight, in cases of spiritual difficulty; but his attentions did not end here, for he devoted much valuable leisure to the assistance of those whose education and mental training had been neglected, and to whom he seemed as if he would willingly have imparted a share of his own gifts.

"But I chiefly felt Mr. Vasey's power when he was in the pulpit. I have heard preachers who were, perhaps, greater, grander, or who soared higher, and who were far more eloquent, so far as words went, but I never heard a preacher so stimulating, so invigorating, so able to communicate his own abounding energy to his congregation. There were times when his words stirred me like the sound of a trumpet, and seemed to enlarge my

very soul. He was a most suggestive preacher, giving his hearers every now and then glimpses down some new avenues of thought—ideas but half worked out, for them to complete. There was a vividness, too, about his narrative sermons that carried you back to the very events themselves, and made you for the time being a spectator of them. It is one thing to describe the beauty of a jewel in the shade; it is another, and a very different thing to bring it out into the sunlight and let us see the splendour streaming from its thousand points. What Mr. Vasey saw he saw clearly, and he had the rare faculty of placing his conceptions with equal distinctness before the minds of his hearers.

"I am aware that this opinion was not universal. Mr. Vasey's delivery was not always happy. He often hesitated for a word, but, when the word came, you forgot the hesitancy. To some hearers delivery is everything; and so long as there is an even flow of words they are content. Hearers of this class were not likely to do Mr. Vasey justice; but those who care for ideas rather than the vehicle which conveys them, looked forward to his ministrations eagerly, and found in them food for meditation long afterwards. His favourite theme was the superabounding love and mercy of God. He used to protest against narrow views on this subject as utterly unworthy—in fact, as the views of finite creatures who forget the Infinite. He delighted in speaking of God's ways being not as our ways, and often reached the sublime in depicting God's love for man.

"His views of the dignity of man were very exalted. Even man's body he looked upon with reverence, as created in the image of God. But the worth of the soul was his chief point, and his appeals to sinners were often addressed to their conscious knowledge of high powers, and a noble destiny. This was only the expression of his own habitual feelings. Remarks like the following abounded in his sermons:—'Take away the divinity of Christ, and you render the offering of no avail. I must know that it is God who suffers and who dies. Were he

a seraph instead of a man, it would make no difference. No, no, my soul is of as much value as that of the highest seraph. I do not hold it cheap; I value, I glory in my immortality, and I will entrust my soul to none less than God Himself. I will place it in His hands or die in despair.'

"He was unusually happy in his illustrations, which were so natural that they seemed to group themselves about his subject instead of being forcibly dragged to it. Here is one. Speaking of those who presume upon God's mercy, and refuse to be saved now on the plea that they can be saved any time, he said, 'If you like to turn food into poison, do so, there is nothing to prevent you. If you like to turn God's gifts against Himself, *do so*. But though His mercy is unchangeable, your power is not. Here is a man in a small boat on the sea close to the shore. He says, "I am tired, I will lie down and sleep a little in my boat, *I can step out any time*." So he lies down and sleeps. But towards evening the dew begins to fall, and he wakes with the chill and gathers himself up, and says, "I will step on shore, and go home." But he looks out and sees his position quite altered. It was high tide when he slept; now the tide began to ebb, and carried him out and out and farther out, and soon he has drifted three or four miles out to sea. The *land has not moved;* it is *his* position which is changed. And he sees he must pull for his life, and he strains every nerve, but the current is against him. His faint and failing strength is against him. The sea begins to rise, and the waves to whiten, and the wind—ah, the wind! There is in it that strange hoarse whistle which makes a sailor's heart to freeze, for it bears death on its wings; and soon the storm is too much for all his efforts, and the boat founders and the man perishes.'

"Many of his illustrations were drawn from the nursery incidents of child-life, narrated in the simplest language, and owing their force to their apt relation to the subject in hand. I find a note of the following. Referring to the display of the divinity of Christ, even while on the very cross, he said:—'The circumstances

precluded any material display, but there was sufficient to satisfy us on this point. For example: As you sit in your house a thunderstorm comes on, and although it is only a little after mid-day, the clouds are almost as black as night. Your little child comes to you and says, "Mother, has the sun gone out?" And you say, "No, my dear, the sun is over there, but we cannot see it, because of these dark clouds." And the child, only half assured, looks in the direction at which you point for a long time. At last there is a little opening between two clouds, through which a pale beam emerges, just for a moment, and the child claps its hand and says, 'O look, mother, *there's* the sun again.' There was only a single ray, and that but for a moment, but the proof is as conclusive as though the sun were visible in all its splendour.

"He was evidently a close observer of children, with whom, indeed, his own simplicity and openness of disposition were much in sympathy. I shall never forget his touching pleadings for the children of vicious parents, and especially one picture of a drunkard's home, and the hardening effect of such an example upon the heart of a little child. So true to nature were some of those scenes that I have seen women burst into tears; again and again renewed long after the narrative had passed.

"Another feature of his sermons, and a marked one, was his sympathy with business men, and his knowledge of the peculiar trials connected with their life. This he owed to his own business training, and the comparative lateness at which he entered the ministry. So large a proportion of our preachers pass so early into the Church that they get no other knowledge of business life than such as they learn from a brief apprenticeship, consequently they know nothing of the surroundings and the large and varied experiences of modern mercantile life. But it was impossible to hear Mr. Vasey's allusions to these matters without being struck with the difference of his tone, as compared with the generality of preachers, whether of our own or of other denominations. One felt

instantly that here was a man who knew these things for himself and was not dealing with them from report only. He knew exactly where the danger lay, and whether he was seeking to strengthen the weak or confirm the strong, or denounce the evil-doer, every word went home. I cannot, unfortunately, recall anything definite on this point, but I remember being struck with this fact very early in the course of his Leeds ministry, and it was a matter of common remark among the business men of his congregations.

"And then, whether in or out of the pulpit, he gave one the idea of personal godliness. He not only pointed to heaven, but led the way, and the force of his example added greatly to his pulpit power. His was a very cheerful piety. There was nothing morose about it. Few men could laugh more heartily or more readily, or had a more frolicsome wit. His was a happy nature. The sunshine of religion lay in his heart and shone out through his eyes, and brightened everything around him. It could not be mistaken for anything else, and the impression formed at my first interview with him was strengthened more and more as my knowledge of him increased. After his removal from the circuit my opportunities of seeing him were very rare, but I remember on meeting him unexpectedly a few months before his death, remarking how ill he looked, and expressing my fears that he suffered much. He evaded the question of suffering, and said, 'My medical man warns me that my life is utterly uncertain, and I am, therefore, prepared for death at any moment. I begin every day as though I should not see the end of it, and I lay down at night not knowing that I shall wake again. I am living for heaven.' This was my last interview with him, and it recalled to my mind a sermon which he had preached in the plenitude of his powers, on a singular text, in which he said, with his characteristic energy, 'People have their own ideas of heaven, how many say if they can only just get within the gates they will be content? Well, I shall not; I am ambitious; with God's help, I

mean to be one of the hundred and forty and four thousand.' "

We add here a specimen of Mr. Vasey's descriptive sermons, to which allusion has been made in the foregoing sketch; which also contains much valuable warning and counsel in reference to religious indecision.

1 Kings, xviii. 21, "How long halt ye between two opinions." The scene opened out to us in these words is a subject for a painting, and the transactions of this day have a world-wide and long-lasting interest. This Mount Carmel is a part of a lofty mountain ridge, running down to the Mediterranean sea, 1,500 feet in height. It commands a wide prospect, and jutting out into a bold promontory in its extreme limit, forms the most conspicuous feature of the coast of Palestine. It might have been selected as the point where the very heart of the world should be touched, and from whence the thrill of that Divine touch was to reach its farthest extremities. It was counted the glory of the land of Palestine, and rightly so, for it was verdant to its very summit. Belts of forest trees, and shrubs garlanded with flowers, encircled its sides, which gently sloped without precipitous or rugged features, and at the top was a plain covered with verdant pasture for the flocks and herds. Yet now its appearance was otherwise. The streams which sprung out of its fissures and ran down its sides, had long since dried up. Its trees all stripped and bare of foliage, looked as if the lightning stroke had scathed them, and its surface scorched and blackened, looked as though it covered a volcanic fire. Yet it is alive with people who come from all sides to it, winding round its paths and gathering on its top, till they blacken it like a swarm of bees. Where are they from? Whose behest do they obey? For what purpose do they gather? They are the representatives of the ten tribes of Israel; they are summoned by a royal mandate; they meet for the settlement of a great national controversy; they are to choose their God. Who are these in close array, 450, clothed in gorgeous vestments, and standing beside a newly-erected altar? They are the priests of Baal; they represent the popular religion and the religion of the court and monarch; they are flushed with the pride and prestige of a dominant hierarchy, and the people pay them a respect mingled with awe and fear. But who is this solitary man that presses through the crowd, and walks into the open space? Mark him well! he is a character, a man of mark, and he will leave his mark upon this age. Moody and melancholy is his mien, solemn and stern his face and brow, rigid and firm his muscular development, plain even to roughness in his garb, but in his eye, when he lifts his face, a fire before which every man that sees him quails. It is Elijah the Tishbite, and both the king and the people have good reason to know him, for they have seen and heard him before. He comforts them now; he is the champion of his God, he is the antagonist of Baal, he has come to defy the 450 and their God, and to summon their besotted votaries to return to their allegiance to Jehovah. Is he not afraid of them, lest in their madness and frenzy

they turn upon him and rend him in pieces? Hath he no safe conduct from Ahab? no military escort? no friend or attendant? No, absolutely none but his God, and in the faith of that God he stands erect and undaunted. He has got a message, and he will deliver it; he wields a power, and he will make that people feel it. Indeed, when you look more closely at that multitude, you will see that they are in no mood for outrage. The red hand of Jehovah's wrath has been upon them for three years. They have left in their homes children that have died upon their mother's breast for want of nourishment, and women wailing for want and woe. They have passed over a country hot with the Almighty's indignation, and the very mountain as it burned their feet, seemed transformed into a monument of vengeance. All this had been at Elijah's word, and well might they tremble in his presence. He approaches them, he beckons, he is about to speak, the hoarse murmur of their voices is hushed whilst he addresses to them the words of the text.

Let us also listen, for it is to us that he speaks.

I. He denounces their apostacy.

II. He demands a decision.

III. He furnishes a test.

I. He denounces their apostacy.

1. They are undecided, therefore they are apostate. They had been born under the reign of Jehovah. Their forefathers had acknowledged Him and covenanted with Him. They had heard His word; they had received His messengers; they had sung the songs of Zion; they had worshipped His holy name; they held their lands under Him, and owed their national existence to Him; and yet they are in actual revolt and rebellion, and it is a matter of opinion not yet decided, whether Jehovah or Baal deserves their fealty. They are apostate; that broken down altar on the top of Carmel attests it; those 450 priests of Baal attest it; the solitary prophet who witnesses for the true God attests it; the people by their very silence under this charge admit the fact.

2. What are the two opinions between which they oscillate? They are the opinion of their *judgment* on the one hand, the opinion of their *passions* on the other. Viewed externally, they appeared to be quite decided in favour of Baal (see xix. 10), yet there was still an inextinguishable spark of their faith left in their breasts. Men who have once known the truth, and who have been trained and nurtured in the belief of it, can never be made into confirmed Atheists, or idolaters. The Amorites might serve their idols without misgivings, but the Israelites never. Men that had been taught by the withering sarcasms of the prophets the folly of idol-worship (Isaiah xl. 18—20), could never acquire a perfect servile reverence for them. See especially xliv. 9—20. Reason, when it has once been illuminated and guided by Divine revelation, can never be content to grope in the darkness of Atheism, or of superstition; it rebels—it asserts its rights—it gives in its adhesion to the truth. And in like manner, conscience once rectified by the oracles of God, though often violently outraged and overborne, revenges itself upon the soul by darting through it such stings as seem to make of it its own hell.

The opinion of REASON and CONSCIENCE, backed by the Word of God, then was in favour of Jehovah.

But who is this Baal who carries the real sway, and rules the land? The word signifies "Lord" or "Master, and is applied in the scriptures of the Old Testament as the word Antichrist is in the new *generically* to denote any god whose worship is set up against that of Jehovah. In the opinion of many learned men, Baal is the same as Bel or Belus of the Babylonians, whose symbol was the sun. But probably in this case Baal and his consort goddess Astaroth—the Phenician Venus—represent the principle of life, whose rites practised for the most part in groves and dark places (glens), were of the most impure and licentious character. This was the idol of their passions; his worship gave the sanction of sacredness to debauchery; relieved them from the bondage of the laws of Jehovah and of their whole religious system—broke down the restraint of decency and propriety which had guarded the sanctities of social and domestic life, and gave full scope and swing to the strongest of human passions. Before the outburst of this storm of passion two of the strongest barriers against public sin—the Sabbath and marriage—were swept away. This worship of Baal was that to which the opposite opinion of the people now inclined. It was supported neither by reason nor conscience, but only by their carnal and corrupt inclinations.

3. Alas, how many beside these Israelites are in this apostate condition! How many in this congregation have forsaken the God of their fathers—the God of their own early choice—the God whose name they learnt, and whose praises they sung in the family or the Sabbath-school.

Are these things no longer even believed?

Are they gone into the region of myths and shams?

Were our mothers deceiving us when they taught us to pray!

Were we hypocrites in our childhood?

Was it only a dream when we felt so happy that all nature seemed to rejoice with us and our very heart leapt for gladness?

Impossible! we could not have been deceived. Our own consciences could not have given us the lie. By what arguments then have we been undeceived? What new light has arisen upon our path? Alas, were we not decided before we argued at all? Did we not look for arguments rather to defend our new position than to lead us to it.

Why have we become scoffers but because we have chosen to walk after our own lusts. (2 Peter iii. 3, 4.) Is not this the real order of our proceeding—1st. Indulging our lusts; 2nd. Scoffing at those who rebuked us; and 3rd. Attempting to argue in defence of our scoffing. But if this be so, then our present apostacy from God is the result of our *lusts*. Baal is for us the impersonation of the lust which for the time being lords it over us. Sometimes it is *fame*, and when our imaginations are fired with this lust we want a wider circle than home—than the Church—than our religious circle of acquaintances can give us, and we must burn incense at any shrine where the world worships. Sometimes it is *wealth*, and then we must not be too strait-laced in our notion of morals and the golden rule. Sometimes it is *position*, and then we must marry and keep up a certain style of

equipage and do as great people do without respect to our religious principles. Sometimes it is *dress and fashion*, and then it would be absurd to take into account the cautions and counsels of old-fashioned Puritanical people that can see a sin in a feather. Sometimes it is *business*, and then everything must give way to it—Sunday and week-day, morning and night, in Church or counting-house alike; it is ever business, the idol is mammon; the creed is the maxim to buy in the cheapest market and to sell in the dearest. The incense is the power and earnestness of an immortal nature, and the sacrifice the eternal happiness of the soul!

These are the Baals that sway the world and drive Jehovah out of His own province and temple.

And if we add to these the paramount regard of what men conceive to be their interest at the expense of their principles, and the indulgence of certain prevalent tastes to the neglect of plain and encumbent duties, we have the world's idolatry portrayed before us.

II. The demand for decision.

"If Jehovah be God, follow him, but if Baal, then follow him."

1. The "if" here implies no uncertainty in the mind of Elijah. It is merely an accommodation to the temper and condition of the people. It is a putting before them the real but awful issue that they have to decide, and which they are indeed virtually deciding already. It is the assertion of an all-important truth that they must choose between these two, that they cannot serve both Jehovah and Baal. See this issue is afterwards put strongly by Christ to the Jews when their idolatry had taken a more sordid turn, and they had become worshippers of Mammon. (Luke xvi. 13, 14.)

2. This is a solemn declaration on God's part, and in God's name that the time has come for this decision. That He will no longer bear this vacillation is evident from the expression "*How long?*" He has given them time to make a fair trial; they know what Baal can do for them and what he cannot do; they have had bitter experience of the misery that his service has brought upon them. They have felt his inability to deliver them from the power of Jehovah's wrath. All their incense and sacrifices, and worship, and invocation have not opened a single spring of water, or made a single blade of grass to grow. Even the king is reduced to such straits that he has to order a survey of the land to see if there be grass enough for the royal horses and mules (see vv. 5 and 6). And he must make it himself with the assistance of his chief counsellor and confidential servant Obadiah. There is therefore no ground for delaying this decision—no place to halt upon—no case for further consideration.

They must therefore choose their master and abide the issue. If they still madly choose Baal, nothing remains for them but further punishment and ultimate destruction. If they choose Jehovah, they may be accepted and forgiven.

3. In like manner God summons His people in these days; those who have known His name, but have declined His service, He cries to them by His messengers, "How long," &c. He appeals once more to their reason and conscience, and also to their experience. What profit have they found in the service of Baal? What protection? What consolation? What satisfaction? What rest to their souls? Has

[illegible] the time of their trouble, terrified and fear[illegible] [illegible] of their sins has turned them when [illegible] them, when scorpions seized them, it [illegible] In the miracles of Samson, it [illegible] in these things when [illegible] fear is upon them. [illegible] of the prophet [illegible] "so that you are [illegible]." If this be so, is not [illegible] there room for "two minions"? is [illegible] them? are not all the elements [illegible] a [illegible] the possibility of a choice [illegible] exist. This commissioned [illegible] We shall not always be so [illegible] will go forth: the final [illegible] "Ephraim is joined to his idols. Let him [illegible]" (Hosea iv. 17).

III. The test [illegible].

How are we to decide the question of Godship? Elijah furnishes a definite test in one. The true God is to hear prayer and to answer by fire.

1. He did so on Mount Carmel. After a whole day spent in vain invocations by the priests of Baal—their cries; their gesticulations; their gushing blood only making their failure the more conspicuous; the sense of it aggravated by the ironical excitements of Elijah—the prophet of God begins to perform his part. With what fixed attention and awful stillness do they watch the man of God, as he slowly rebuilds the ruined altar of Jehovah, every disjointed stone of which testifies of their former loyalty and of their present apostasy. He lays the wood; he prepares the victim; he arranges its limbs on the altar; he calls for water before he invokes the fire; they bring it as already provided from the neighbouring sea; he floods the altar; he soaks the wood; he fills the trench till the altar is insulated by a watery lake.

What next? He prays; he invokes Jehovah; he refers all his mysterious acts to His behest; he claims to be visibly sanctioned and sustained.

There is perhaps a moment's pause, and then—hark! what a rush through the air! what a blinding blaze! what a crackling noise. See the fire has come!—the holy fire from heaven; such as had been seen at the dedication of the temple of Solomon, but never since. It seizes the victim; it consumes the wood; it pulverizes the stones of the altar; it licks up the water in the trench. See the pillar of cloud once more composed of mingled steam and smoke; it announces the presence of Jehovah again with His people; it is the pledge of the old national covenant; the victory is won; the people are proclaimed; Jehovah, He is the God; and the blood of the priests of Baal cements the new covenant and attests the sincerity of the people.

2. God has given the same proof to men under the Christian dispensation; *He did it in the day of Pentecost.* There in connection with a greater sacrifice than that which the prophet offered, and at the instance of a more powerful mediator, He sent the rushing mighty wind, the cloven tongues as of fire, the fiery baptism of the Holy Ghost. There He converted an assembled multitude of

thousands, turning them from their sins, and saving them from their sins.

3. He does the same still, and ever after a spiritual sort. He hears prayers; He answers by fire; kindling the flame of love; the sin-consuming fire in the altar of human hearts. He has done it to thousands; to many here; He waits to do it now. Apply—

1. Make haste; fall down; turn from your idols; repent of your sins; invoke God's mercy; yield yourselves up to His service; covenant with Him to be His alone and for ever.

2. Meet him in Christ; His death is your propitiation; His sacrifice was offered to atone for your sins; He pleads for you now; He calls you back to God.

3. You shall have the blessing; the Holy Ghost; the rain from heaven; obliterating your sins, and restoring verdure, and beauty, and life to your souls.

The added impressions are by the pen of one who had the most ample opportunities of marking Mr. Vasey's ministerial career in Leeds. He describes his personal appearance and characteristics as follows:—"Mr. Vasey was a little below the middle height; of neat and compact build, and of great nervous energy, which manifested itself in the usually clenched hand. He had a firm step and somewhat martial bearing, which lent a dignity to the whole man, and which had the appearance of pride to those who took their impressions from the exterior only. His countenance was fair, refined, and lighted by a very happy expression, which seldom betrayed any feeling of affliction or sorrow, and was assuring to all who sought him for pastoral comfort. He had a high, compact forehead, giving you an idea of great intellectual powers, developed by hard study. His brown eye, though not large, was full, quick and inquiring, and indicated great humour. He had lost most of his hair in early life, and the consequent baldness served to display the beautiful proportions of his noble head. In his firmly-set mouth could be discerned that force of character which, sanctified by the grace of God, was the source of his fortitude in trial and of his power to keep in subjection his naturally proud spirit. His appearance in the pulpit was dignified and manly. He had a voice not strong but clear in the lower and middle and a little cracked in the upper notes. The Bible adjusted, and

his eye having taken the circle and measure of his congregation, he commenced in slow and impressive tones, and as he proceeded his auditory was impressed with the literalness of his subject, felt its importance through the earnestness and solicitude displayed by the preacher, and yielded to the power which, in his best moods, was complete and overwhelming. On one occasion, whilst preaching on the Atonement, two young men in the congregation were so inspired with faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour that, remaining at the prayer-meeting, they testified of their new-found happiness; and the same evening six others were brought to a saving knowledge of the Redeemer.

"Mr. Vasey was possessed of a clear judgment, quick perception, sound understanding, and such habits of minute analysation and calm thought as gave him in the Church an administrative power few possess. He was the best administrator of Church discipline we ever had, ever mingling mercy with justice, and exhibiting a manly Christian temper. If ever I have seen him lose the reins of self-government, it has been when, in his pastoral relations, he has been brought into contact with persons whose actions betrayed their profession. At such times his whole soul seemed to rise in righteous indignation, and under this feeling he would grasp the dissecting knife and lay bare the character in such a way as none but those skilled in the anatomy of the human heart could succeed in doing."

The Conference of 1860 conducted its deliberations in London, and Mr. Vasey had the happiness of seeing his old superintendent, the Rev. W. W. Stamp, introduced into the chair of the presidency. He returned home, when Conference closed, to make arrangements for leaving his circuit, and for the journey of his suffering wife, in which he was most kindly aided by the Leeds friends, an invalid carriage being provided with special reference to her ease and comfort. And at the appointed time pastor and people separated with mutual feelings of regret and affection.

CHAPTER X.

LONDON NINTH (HACKNEY) CIRCUIT.

THE journey to town was accomplished with no small anxiety and difficulty, and it was very pleasant to the feelings of the family, on their arrival at Hackney, to receive the warm greetings of old friends. On this account, though the abode upon which they entered was not the one occupied nine years before, they were quickly at home. And this was peculiarly the case with Mr. Vasey in the pulpit. To recognise in his congregations so many of the faces of the hearers of former days, was to him a source of great gratification, whilst his old friends rejoiced to be again privileged with his ministrations, and "to note a beautiful mellowness in his Christian graces."

"One of his first acts was to seek out a member of his flock with whom he had come into harsh collision during the Connexional paroxysm of 1849—51, and who had in consequence left the Society but subsequently returned. He warmly expressed his joy at the prospect of joining with him again in the work of the Lord under happier auspices. The effect of this kindly act was most felicitous."

During Mr. Vasey's first year at Hackney, he was associated in the work of the ministry with the Revs. Henry M. Harvard and Benjamin Field; the Rev. James Chalmers, M.A., succeeding Mr. Field the following year. And never were colleagues more united in love, and in the determination to labour together for God's glory, nor engaged more heartily for this end.

In October Mr. Vasey accompanied the President, the Rev. W. W. Stamp, in his visit to Scotland. The Rev. W. C. Booth was also one of the deputation. On their return journey their services were engaged at the Leeds Missionary Anniversary Meetings, which afforded Mr. Vasey an opportunity of seeing the friends of his late circuit. A few extracts from letters written whilst on this missionary tour may be interesting.

"Edinburgh, October 15th, 1860.—The morning has been wintry, but I have visited several places of great interest, such as the Heriot Hospital, the Grey Friars Church (in the yard of which the 'Solemn League and Covenant' was signed), and where is the tomb of the martyrs under the prelatical persecution), and the monument of the infamous Claverhouse himself. Went also through the College Library, and saw some very interesting curiosities there, such as the Deed of Protest signed by the princes present at the Council of Constance against the murder of Huss; some old illuminated missals and psalters in vellum, and various other things. Met with Mr. Miller, who being garrison chaplain got us through the Castle. Saw the Regalia, and all other curious relics and place ; amongst the rest the cells where the Duke of Argyle and other Reformation leaders were imprisoned, and from which they were taken to the place of execution."

"Sterling, 20th October, 1860.—I am afraid you would be disappointed in my note yesterday. I had, however, but little in the way of news to communicate. My interview with Mr. B. was very satisfactory in all respects; we had a good deal of talk about sermons, and in most respects his views and methods harmonize with mine. He was pleased to express himself very highly as to my speeches, and to state that they had exactly suited the taste of the Scotch people, and would leave a powerful and permanent impression. This, from him, I considered a high compliment, and I hope you will forgive me mentioning it to you, as I think you will be pleased that my labour is not in vain.

"The museum of antiquities which we visited yesterday morning was very interesting, and contained some good Scotch relics, amongst other things, the identical stool (as alleged) which Jenny Geddes flung at the head of the prelatic minister in the Cathedral. Also a pulpit preached in by John Knox. . . . At Glasgow, we had a very interesting visit to the training college of Mr. Stow, where, you will remember, we used to have all our students trained. Afterwards visited the old Cathedral, which presents some very interesting relics six hundred years old, and is kept in excellent repair. . . . The thing that has struck me most is a new church in a low, populous neighbourhood, which has a stone pulpit and awning outside, commanding an open space at the confluence of several streets, from which a preacher might address several thousands of people."

"Perth Railway Station, October 22nd, 1860.—. . . I did not receive a letter from you before I started from Stirling, and I expect this pleasure awaits me at Aberdeen. . . . I had a good night's rest on Saturday, and again last night. This keeps me from suffering at all in my head. My lungs, however, feel the cold air, and I have had to mount my respirator at Edinburgh, but have not had recourse to it since. In the morning yesterday I preached in our chapel at Stirling, which is a very neat place for about 450 people. I took for my text my favourite 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost,' which I thought might be suitable to keep up the good Methodist doctrine in Scotland. In the afternoon I preached in the Free Church to an excellent and attentive congregation from 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' and there was a very gracious influence, and more display of feeling than I expected. At night I preached again in our own chapel, which was full, from 'It is finished,' after which we held a prayer meeting, at which nearly 100 people stayed, mostly belonging to other churches, and very serious and devout."

"Gledhow, Leeds, 29th October, 1860. . . . I have paid a visit to the Cemetery, and dropt a few tears

of sorrow, not unmingled with gratitude over the graves of our glorified and happy children. The stone is engraved, and the grave neat and orderly, the grass beginning to grow upon it. I had intended to go into Mr. Morley's after the cemetery to-day, but my spirits were too much depressed to allow it."

Mr. Vasey returned home refreshed on the whole by his tour; but as winter advanced, the old bronchial symptoms returned, and for several weeks he was so sensitive to atmospheric changes as to be compelled to remain indoors, and for awhile it was necessary to preserve an even temperature in the room occupied. When a little better, the use of a respirator enabled him to resume his duties, and with the return of spring, his enemy disappeared.

In July of the year he attended the Conference held at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and by appointment of the President wrote the pastoral address, which was considered "admirably written and spirit-stirring throughout, and eminently practical." In a letter home on August 8th, he makes an allusion to it: "I have just read my pastoral address, which has been less criticized than I expected, and enthusiastically carried." Mr. Vasey, as a thoroughgoing Methodist preacher, was concerned heart and soul in the prosperity of the community to which he belonged. Hence he was deeply interested in Conference debates and deliberations, and though he never talked simply to make his voice heard, and indeed often exercised considerable self-restraint, in deference to his senior brethren, yet did he not hesitate to state his own views and convictions as occasion seemed to require. It is not necessary to speak here of his powers as a debater, but we refer the reader to the views of the Rev. Dr. Rigg, expressed in his letter in the Appendix, and which may be considered to represent the general opinion of Mr. Vasey's brethren in the ministry on this subject. We may, however, state, that his influence increased, year by year, particularly with his brethren on the floor of the Conference.

Whilst in the north, Mr. Vasey responded to a request for his services on an anniversary occasion, from his old friends at Darlington, and took the opportunity to visit the house of which he was formerly the tenant. He thus alludes to this visit in a letter to his wife :—

"I have been vividly reminded of the passages in my life twenty years and more ago—visiting the house and looking at the room in which I received my call to preach, and retracing the path along which some of the most strong and decisive struggles of my soul have been acted out."

The result of this retrospection was a re-consecration of his talents to the service of the Redeemer; and never was his zeal as an evangelist more apparent than now. Ever on the alert for openings for usefulness, he perceived the need of extended Christian effort, in the district of Homerton, and at once set about raising the necessary funds to provide a Home Mission Chapel. In this work he found many valuable coadjutors in the society, and soon had the pleasure of seeing a neat place of worship erected, which was to be the centre of fresh evangelistic effort in that neighbourhood.

In reference to this erection, the Rev. J. V. Shrewsbury writes, "It was during Mr. Vasey's ministry here, that the Homerton Home Mission Chapel was built, in a most needy district. This movement has proved a great success. We have now turned the chapel into a day-school, and a much larger chapel is being built in lieu of the former."

In connection with this effort, we may mention an incident, which proves that whilst provoking others to good works, according to their several abilities, Mr. Vasey eagerly availed himself of every means put into his hands for the promotion of the work of God. An old Yorkshire friend coming up to town, brought him a present of cloth for a suit. During this visit, the scheme upon which Mr. Vasey's heart was set was mentioned, and endeavouring to enlist the sympathy and aid of his friend, the list of subscriptions was handed to him for

his information. Noticing Mr. Vasey's name down for £5, his friend remonstrated with him, as being more than he could afford. To which he replied, "I consider your present has saved me £5, and therefore enabled me to give that sum towards the new chapel." The fact was, however, that the subscription had been promised before the cloth came to hand, and the present simply empowered Mr. Vasey to pay the sum without the practice of self-denial, as would have been necessary but for the kindness of his friend.

That aggressive movements were made in other places in the circuit, during Mr. Vasey's ministry there, is testified by one then residing in the circuit, and who is himself now actively and successfully engaged in extending the cause of the Redeemer, in connection with a Congregational Church. He says, "At the time that Mr. Vasey was in the Hackney circuit, we were endeavouring to raise a new cause at Enfield Highway among those engaged in the Government Rifle Factory, and Mr. Vasey threw himself into it with characteristic zeal and energy. On one occasion I remember that he came down from London in the morning in order to hold an open air service during the dinner hour of the workmen. Standing a short distance from the gates, he preached with great fervour (if I remember correctly) on the words, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after that the judgment." As a young man preparingfor the ministry, I received much help from him; he was always ready to direct my reading and studies; and this he did with the most perfect urbanity and kindness.

"The one thing above all others that impressed me in Mr. Vasey, was his intense zeal for the conversion of sinners; all his remarkable powers seemed to be consecrated to this end, and no one could hear him preach or come much into contact with him without partaking of his spirit."

That the deep interest manifested by Mr. Vasey in young men preparing for the ministry found further

practical scope in the Hackney Circuit, is testified in the appended reminiscences supplied by one who was of the number of those favoured with his valuable advice and assistance.

I wish I could tell all the love and reverence that I have felt for Mr Vasey since the day when I first saw him.

Perhaps by simply relating the story of his kindness to me I can best illustrate the interest he took in young men.

It was in the year 1861 that I left my home in the country and came to London, a member of the Methodist Society and a local preacher. I at once attached myself to the Wesleyan church nearest my residence, and tried to find some work. But there was nothing to be done in the school, or in preaching, and though in London there is always enough ready-made work to hand, I felt the want of belonging to some regular organization, especially as I had a growing conviction of my call to the ministry. I knew but two or three people in the congregation with whom I worshipped, and went in and out amongst them as a stranger without a word of friendly recognition —a state of things which, I am thankful to hope, is less common in London Methodism to-day.

When I had been in London a few weeks, I had been invited to the house of Mr. Duncan, who then lived at Hackney, and there first met Mr. Vasey. He was at that time superintendent of the Hackney Circuit. He had never seen me before, or heard my name, but during the evening he came to me and began to talk in a kindly, genial way, such as at once opened my heart towards him. He asked me my name, what I was doing in London, and what I was trying to do for God. I told him very briefly, and, after our few minutes' acquaintance, he said, "Now you must come to tea with me on Saturday next, at six o'clock, and we will have a long talk together."

I little thought of what that talk would lead to, but left him, feeling a devotion and love to him such as only a noble and generous nature like his could win; and if we had never met again I should have always gratefully remembered the manliness, the thoroughness, and the pleasant warmheartedness which then so impressed me.

The recollection of the Saturday following is very vividly impressed on my mind. I was shown into the study, where tea was set for us two only. I remember his hearty greeting that put me at once at my ease, and the pleasant Yorkshire bidding—"Now, reach to."

When the tea was done, he sat in the rocking-chair with those small white hands clasped behind the round, bald head, and pleasantly said, "Come now, I want you to tell me who you are, and what you are doing, and all about yourself."

It happened that for many weeks I had felt an irrepressible conviction of my call to the ministry, and had longed for light and direction in the matter. Thoughts and feelings that burned within me for weeks past, until I prayed that either my way might be opened or these impressions be destroyed for ever: here, now, they found this strange outlet encouraged to the utmost freedom by such kindness.

As I finished my account of myself, Mr. Vasey said, "Now you must come and live near me. I shall bring your name before the March Quarterly Meeting, and you will be proposed for the ministry at the District Committee Meeting in May.

This was the beginning of a kindness and interest that it is impossible to describe. Three* of us met at his house each week for examination and direction in our reading and preaching work. His remarkably concise definitions of doctrines, and his terse and vigorous summary of arguments, have never been forgotten, treasured no less for their concise fulness than for the sake of him who is so dear to us.

When in my first circuit, where I had the joy of many interviews with him, he told me that at the time we first met he had been praying that God would direct to him young men who felt themselves called to the work of the ministry, and who needed such advice and help as that which he gave to us.

Others who knew him longer may speak of him more generally, but only young men—perhaps only young men situated as we were—could appreciate this particular feature of his character, and all the strengthening influences that he carried with him. It is good to recall that geniality, that frank generosity, that freshness of sympathy, that quickness and ardour, that touch of outspoken impetuosity, that love of striking through words home to the heart of things, which made him as one of us—to remember all this, blended with a large wisdom, with an abhorrence of the immoral and the mean, and with a manly tenderness such as heightened our love into reverence, and, completing him, to think of that undefinable gentlemanliness, and that valour, as of "a good soldier," who loved the very front rank of the battle, and the simple but rich spiritual life that he encouraged us to seek, by the beauty of his own example.

The following, contributed by another Wesleyan minister who derived much benefit from Mr. Vasey's friendly counsel some years previously, will not be out of place here.

The interest manifested by Mr. Vasey in the welfare of young men, especially those who were looking forward to the work of the ministry is well worthy of record.

There were strongly marked traits in his character calculated to challenge the admiration and win the affections of young men, at the same time that they evoked and directed vigorous effort. His manliness, business-like qualities, frankness, decision, promptitude, spirit, (many would not think it inappropriate to add), mettle—characteristics sanctified and awaiting his Master's command—strongly contrasted with and condemned what was merely professional, weak, and irre-

* The three are now Wesleyan ministers—The Rev. Theophilis Chubb, missionary, now in Africa, was one; the Rev. Nathaniel Stevens, now at Belper, was another; the third was the Rev. M. G. Pearse, of the Highbury Circuit.

solute. Thus those who sought the benefit of his counsels were given unmistakeably to feel what they must be if they would have his desires respecting them realised. Honestly and outspokenly he said what he intended to say; and as he dealt with others in such a way as to encourage manliness and exertion, he could not fail either to repress or uproot the opposite qualities in those who still chose to accept of his friendliness.

When he alluded to the work of the ministry his whole soul seemed intent upon imparting the light and fire of his personal knowledge and experience. He so talked about preaching the Gospel that it appeared, not a weak and uncertain means, but what it truly is, "the power of God unto salvation." As he produced a renewed assurance that the Gospel *could* be preached with power, so there came the accompanying conviction, that not occasionally but continually it *ought* to be the means of awakening and converting sinners. By references to the power and success of the early Methodist preachers, and the fears expressed by some stray or occasional hearers, that if they went into the Methodist Chapel too frequently they would be converted, he deepened the sense of obligation, and nourished the desire and expectation to see results. He thus endeavoured to keep before himself and others the thought that it was an unsatisfactory state of things if results were not seen.

He laid great stress upon the truths which were necessary to be presented. As an illustration of the blessed results of proclaiming Christ fully and freely, he said, "On one occasion I preached to some 'roughs,' and after I had told them that Christ was ready to receive them, bad as they were, some came with tears rolling down their cheeks, expressing themselves in their own style, warmly and gratefully." He then added, "These men talk amongst themselves about hell and damnation, but they need to be told of a Saviour able to save to the uttermost. In this manner he was heard appealing to a crowd from a railway waggon during the Hull Conference of 1869. Several years after the above conversation he similarly expressed his views. An observation had been made in conference respecting the soul-saving character of Mr. Fields' ministry, when Mr. Vasey remarked, "that he thought that the great secret of his success had been that he had shown ready sympathy with the spiritual condition of his hearers, and had dwelt much upon the elements of Christian doctrine and experience."

In giving advice respecting the particular work of preaching he did not speak abstractedly, nor deal in sundry stereotype instructions, but regarded it in relation to the young beginner, and sought to educate him and to deal with him according to his capabilities and requirements. This gave a kind of personal interest to his counsels which proved very stimulating. Faithfully and wisely could he refer to any weakness, and not less backward was he in affording encouragement by pointing out and helping to make the most of what he thought was "in" a young man. "There's plenty of edge," said he to one after hearing him preach, "but you must put more strength at the back. Truth is felt, not only when the edge is keen; it must have strength at the back." Don't use many adjectives; what is said is often weakened by them. He encouraged not mere smatterers, he wanted

strength, strong subjects, strength of thought, strength in putting the truth with the strength of a spiritual mind and sympathetic heart.

When walking with a candidate to hear a trial sermon, the conversation turned upon the text, "When He is come He will reprove the world of sin—because they believe not on me." "Preach from that," said he, "it's a good subject. I should like to hear what you can do with it." As its preparation was not felt to be so far advanced as the occasion seemed to demand, expediency indicated that the one previously fixed upon should be taken. On the way home reference was made to the effort, when he said, "I would rather have heard you flounder through the other, and then I should have seen what was in you."

There appeared to be a fullness of meaning in many texts about which he conversed. He appeared to seize hold of their very spirit, and with much earnestness showed how they must be brought to bear upon the conscience and life. It may be supposed that as the result of these conversations the danger of skimming over a subject was felt, and at the same time a powerful impetus given to think and pray, and think and pray over it until the soul become possessed of its deep spiritual meaning and bearing.

He laid great stress upon the importance of sufficient preparation, and made a remark to this effect, "You will have to make good sermons from principle, for you will find in many of our congregations some persons who will be very much pleased with what may cost you little thought, and fail to appreciate what has been well studied." He then alluded to the relative worth, influence, and usefulness of some sermons, upon which he had bestowed much careful effort when a local preacher.

He sought to animate with courage in the faithful application of the truth. "I would never make an apology in the pulpit," said he, when referring to this subject, that is, for the utterance of any truth which his conscience impelled him to proclaim. How deeply he felt opposed to any encroachment upon the preacher's liberty to be faithful is incidentally evidenced by the following extract from a few notices he drew up of one who was once a constant hearer. "No preaching, however pointed, faithful, or attended by sharp rebuke ever offended him as long as it was true, scriptural, and evidently well intended. He never sought to abridge 'the liberty of prophesying' by any hints to the preacher to soften his tone or restrain his animadversions on prevalent follies or inconsistencies. He felt and avowed that the welfare of the Methodist societies depended on faithful, earnest preaching." This reference seems, in a certain way, to tell us the kind of preacher Mr. Vasey aimed to be, and perhaps not less what he really was, as a faithful herald of the truth.

In November, 1861, Mr. Vasey was suddenly attacked with alarming illness, which for a few hours threatened to bring to an immediate close his valuable life, and considerably enfeebled his physical powers.

The following letter was written to his sister after his convalescence.

Hackney, 26th November, 1861.

My Dear Jane,

I am glad to be able to report myself once more off the sick-list, and am very thankful to take full work, and to go about it with tolerable freedom from anxiety and apprehension. Mary Jane has had a severe attack of inflammation, no doubt brought on by her excitement and exertion about me, but is now slowly recovering. I must consider myself admonished by this sudden attack to set my house in order. . . . It is, however, very possible that this may be a means of putting me on my guard against the source of danger, and so prolonging my life for a few years. It appears that though there is no organic disease of the heart, there is great functional feebleness, so that on any sudden prostration of the general strength, its action is liable to be overpowered. I am to keep myself well up with generous living, and to eat meat three or four times a day, which is no bad medicine, and of which I have felt the benefit very much for the last few weeks. I consider myself now fully restored, and with care and moderation in preaching may get through pretty well. My doctor went to hear me preach the other night, and lectured me about undue exertion and excitement, though I was rather more restrained than usual. I am, however, in the hands of God, and shall not be dismissed till I have done my full tale of work. I am living only for this, and shall joyfully receive my discharge from the war, when the Captain of my salvation is pleased to sign it. Yet it looks so like a near victory and triumph for the cause of truth, that I have no desire to be released. Mary Jane desires her love and Lizzie also.

Yours affectionately,
Thomas Vasey.

To the same he writes on December 31st, 1861, "A happy new year to you, in spite of all wars and rumours of wars, bad trade, bad debts, gloomy forebodings, and everything else. These have nothing at all to do with our real happiness, and if we dig down deep enough below all these superficial obstructions we shall find a foundation on which we may, by God's help, rear a structure of happiness that will bid defiance to all storms and earthquakes whatsoever. I feel that I have got down to that rock, and am immovably fixed thereon, consequently have a certain amount of solid and real comfort and peace, which I would not part with for the world. The past year has been one of considerable anxiety and uneasiness about many things, but of considerable enjoyment also, and, notwithstanding the state

of public affairs, which are sufficiently gloomy and cast a shadow over everything, I have a great deal for which to be thankful at home. My health seems quite re-established, and I am saved from all uneasiness on that score. Mary Jane seems to have been improved a good deal by her recent medical treatment. We are to have a society tea meeting here on Friday, to try to do the people good. I had an unusually powerful day on Sunday."

Mr. Vasey's late seizure found him in the possession of experience similar to that which he had expressed to a friend in Leeds when he declared himself as ready to die as to put off his slippers. But though often weary in the strife with the combined forces of evil outside the Church, and deeply tried by inconsistent professors, who, by their unfaithful and unchristian conduct weakened, rather than strengthened the hands of their pastor; yet he did not desire a discharge from the war, but rather to remain, if it were God's will, to help forward to their accomplishment His saving purposes towards a fallen but redeemed world.

The new year found him prosecuting his circuit duties with redoubled ardour. As was his custom, he had endeavoured to make the usual services of this season as impressive and fruitful of good results as possible; and though these were not according to his desires, yet he and his co-workers had to rejoice in some symptoms of quickening throughout the societies, and the accession of some wanderers to the fold of Christ. His business now, however, was to sow patiently rather than to reap plentifully. This, to his ardent spirit, was a bitter experience, and he sometimes chafed under the disappointment, when, after exhaustive efforts in preaching, he witnessed no conversions. In his intense longing to see visible fruits of his powerful appeals Mr. Vasey was, for his own peace of mind, too apt to overlook effects which, though less apparent, were not less real. This insatiable desire for immediate results arose out of his deep and pressing convictions of the increasing

danger of those who, week after week, listened to most heart-searching preaching without being brought to decision for Christ. In the earlier years of his ministry Mr. Vasey had given the most anxious attention to the subject of the perpetuity of hell's torments, that he might, as he afterwards declared, find, if possible, a loop hole of escape from the fearful certainty of everlasting damnation. As he became in the course of his inquiries more fully convinced of the truth of this awful doctrine, he rolled on the study floor in the agony of his soul. The result of these studies he embodied in two sermons in particular, from the texts "He which is filthy, let him be filthy still," and "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Both are fearful expositions of the eternal doom of sinners. Mr. Vasey never preached them but at the cost of excessive anguish, which was indicated in his countenance and manner, and the effect upon his congregation was such that the utmost stillness prevailed, and indeed for a time his hearers seemed spell-bound. We think it will not be irrelevant to introduce here one of these sermons, and give the one on "Where their worm dieth not," etc., Mark ix. 44, as being the least lengthy of the two. In the introduction Mr. Vasey says :—

The ministry of Jesus Christ was eminently a gracious one; it is called "preaching peace." But He was a preacher of righteousness as well as of peace. He vindicated the honour and the authority of the Divine law; He denounced terribly all transgressors of it. And He did not scruple to express Himself on these subjects in the plainest and strongest manner, so as to produce the most terrific impressions on the minds of sinners. The circumstances of those to whom, for the most part, His ministry was addressed, required such faithful dealing. They were children of the seed of Abraham, brought up amidst religious privileges, habituated from their infancy to religious ordinances; they were well instructed in the law of God, and prided themselves on their knowledge of it. And yet they were unawakened—they slept on in the midst of all—unconvinced of their guiltiness before God, without alarm for their danger, and consequently without any struggle for salvation. And to rouse them from such a deadly stupor required something extraordinary. My brethren, there is nothing so difficult as to save a man with his mind enlightened and informed and yet a sinner. You can bring before him nothing new; if you reason with him, he admits the force of your arguments, he will even confess that he is a sinner; but it is evident that there is no

suitable conviction of danger, no corresponding feeling of horror and alarm. The only way to reach such a person is to represent to him the full extent of his danger, to urge upon him this truth: that every moment he lives in an unconverted state he is in danger of hell-fire. This was the mode adopted by Jesus Christ, and His example is a safe pattern for every Christian preacher. Only, it is needful that he who deals in such terrific truths should have drunk deeply into the Spirit of Him, who mingled His tears with His denunciations. There must be a yearning pity for souls in the heart of him who preaches the "terrors of the Lord." In this spirit, therefore, let us approach the consideration of this awful subject. But that none of us may feel as if we were unconcerned in it, let us remember at the outset that these words were spoken chiefly, if not exclusively, to those who were the disciples and personal adherents of Jesus Christ.

These words exhibit to us—

I. The general doctrine of the eternity of future punishment.

II. The elements of that eternal torment.

I. The general doctrine of the eternity of future punishment is plainly revealed in Holy Scripture.

The testimony of God, through His written Word, is the foundation of faith; we believe what we read there because it is written, whatever may be the difficulties attending our comprehension of it. And we expect to find every doctrine of revelation taught with a clearness and frequency equal to its importance. If we examine the testimony of Holy Writ on this momentous doctrine, we shall find it conveyed in almost every form. It is asserted in express terms. See Matt. xxv. 41—46, 2 Thess. i. 8, 9, Rev. xiv. 11, John iii. 36, Jude 7, Matt. xxvi. 24. This last passage is by far the most decisive on this point. For if the punishment of Judas were even to have an end, and he be restored to a state of happiness, then it had been good for him to have been born, since an eternity of felicity would immeasurably outweigh any sufferings endured in time, however protracted. And since the sin of Judas and the men of Sodom, did not so much exceed the sin of others, as eternal torment exceeds any temporal pains, it follows that whatever difference of degree there may be in this future punishment, there can be none in the duration of it, which in all cases will be everlasting.

It is implied in figurative representations.

It is called the "second death," Rev. xxi. 8, because it is followed by no resurrection. That place where it is endured is called the "bottomless pit," Rev. xx. 1, because it affords no resting-place where the sinking soul may stay itself. It is called "wrath to come," 1 Thess. i. 10, because it is never spent or exhausted, but perpetually future. And in the text, whatever is implied in these expressions, "The worm that dieth not," &c., &c., perpetual duration of suffering is signified by them. The gulf which separates between heaven and hell, and which is impassable, describes the utter impossibility of change in the condition of lost souls.—Luke xvi. 26.

It is necessarily involved in the statement of these doctrines, there can be no remission of punishment where there is no cessation from sin. But Rev. xxii. 11 affirms that wicked men departed, never

cease to be wicked. There can be no remission without satisfaction; but the sacrifice of Christ once rejected will never be repeated. See Hebrews x. 26, 27. There can be no pardon of sin without first sorrow for sin; but evangelical repentance in hell is impossible, since there is no motive to repent when there is no hope of mercy. And what hope can there be where all is darkness and despair?—Isaiah xxxviii. 18. And lastly, if the state of sinners in another world admits of no change, and the doom of eternal punishment is pronounced by Him, who neither lies nor repents, the Scriptural doctrine of the immutability of God sets the seal of eternity upon this decreed punishment.

Being thus revealed, it is consistent with the dictates of an enlightened reason. Not that we believe it the more firmly on this account, but we are able to meet the cavils of those who doubt or deny it.

It is consistent with a rational belief in the attributes of God: of His justice. It is not unjust in God to punish eternally sins committed in time. The period of its commission is not a true criterion of the evil of sin, which derives its malignity from the Divine Majesty of Him against whom it is committed. Illustrate this by the guilt of murder, by a sudden blow or by slow poison. The most horrible sins are often the most speedily committed. The shortness of human life, a fearful aggravation of the sins of men, since they might on that account the more easily hold out against the temptations which so soon are past.

Of His goodness. The punishment of death and transportation for life are considered to be beneficial to society generally, on the ground that incorrigible villains must be separated from the society of honest people, whom they would otherwise either injure or corrupt; and also on the ground of the salutary influence of their punishment, to deter others from crime. And equally necessary is the eternal punishment of finally impenitent and unreformed sinners when viewed as an eternal separation and an eternal example. See Matt. xiii. 40—42, Jude 7, Rev. xiv. 10. And it would not be difficult from analogy to show, that, even with respect to sinners themselves, it is of the goodness of God that their lives are cut short, since we know that the prolonged age of the antediluvians only aggravated the enormity of their crimes, and by consequence the degree of their punishment; for though all future punishment is eternal, it is not in all cases equal. It will be worse for Capernaum in the day of judgment than for Sodom.

It is consistent with what we know of the constitution of man in this limited state. A man may by one act of folly make himself a cripple for life; by a wilful perseverance in vicious courses he may irremediably impair his constitution; by one act of dishonesty, a man in a high station of trust may irretrievably ruin his character; and by a deliberate and continued addiction to evil habits a man may become the hopeless slave of them. And if sins so transient in their commission may in this world entail mischief which lasts for a lifetime, why may not the sins of time inherit and deserve the retributions of eternity?

It is more consistent ith wreason than any different or opposite

belief. For admitting it to be a doctrine of revelation, it follows, either that God has the right to prescribe the punishment due to sin, or He has not. If not, then where is this right lodged? In holy beings? If so, then they must concur in God's appointment. Or is it with wicked natures?

Then surely there would be no punishment at all. And further, if there be no eternity of pain there can be no eternity of joy; but the Scriptures use precisely the same terms to express both; and corrupt reason would cavil at one, only upon principles which would affect both; we cannot, therefore, hold an eternal heaven if we deny an eternal hell.

III. Being revealed in Scripture, and approved by an enlightened reason, this doctrine is a most salutary one. It is adapted to deter men from vice. It is sufficiently obvious that no temporary evils attendant on sin have the effect of restraining men from its commission. Witness the evils of lust and drunkenness; the thieves and pickpockets, who busily ply their vocation even under the gallows where their comrades pay the penalty of the law. But the conviction that for the sinful pleasures and pursuits of a few delirious hours the forfeit of everlasting bliss must be paid, and the pains of eternal remorse endured, may well exercise a powerful restraint on human vices. And accordingly it has been admitted by the most respectable Deistical writers (and on this point there is a singular agreement among them) that the doctrine of eternal punishment is necessary to the well-being of society, and ought to form a part of every political code.

It affords a useful corrective of the abuse of Gospel mercy.

The New Testament contains clearer discoveries of heavenly blessedness than the Old Testament. It affords more full and affecting discoveries of the Divine mercy in its desires and efforts to bring all men to its enjoyment; and it sheds a bright and steady light upon the way to heaven. And the carnal minds of men are too apt to abuse all these rich and full manifestations, so as to presume upon the mercy of God, and delay or neglect altogether the means of escape. Hence the necessity for revelations of another character, to assure men that even the author of the Gospel is a sin-avenging God. And the New Testament, therefore, which opens to us the view of a heaven of everlasting glory to be obtained by all who will embrace the Saviour, also discloses to us the horrors of an everlasting hell, to which that very Saviour will consign all those who wilfully and finally reject Him. It furnishes a powerful motive to the perseverance of the saints.

When temptations press upon the soul, when sin is made by the tempter to appear so plausible that we cannot see its malignity, when the soul, thus blinded and bewildered, is urged to some sudden, secret, and enticing sin, there is nothing but the thought of eternal pain to follow it, that can restrain us until we have recovered from this temporary delusion. This was the use made of it by our Saviour in reference to his disciples, of whom one was at this very moment nurturing the sin that was to sink him into the abyss of eternal torment.

II. The elements of eternal torment have respect to the complex constitution of man, body and soul; for the former—

1. The fire. The bodies of men are in Scripture described as co-partners with the soul in guilt. They minister incentives to sin by the admission through the senses of all external objects of temptation; they make sin palatable, and in some sense delightful, by those pleasurable sensations which they convey to the soul during its commission; they are also the "instruments of unrighteousness unto sin," "servants to uncleanness and to iniquity." Rom. vi. 13—19. And as they are co-partners in guilt so also in punishment. For this they "are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment." The seal of Christ is set upon the mouldering dust of every wicked man, to guard and keep it to the day of resurrection, both of the just and also of the unjust. At that day the bodies of all men, good and bad, "shall be raised incorruptible," incapable of dissolution, endowed with qualities fitted for eternal duration, the one of misery, the other of glory. And when He that has the keys of death and Hades, i.e., of the grave, which holds the bodies, and the place which detains the separate spirits of departed men, when He shall have opened these receptacles and adjudged to damnation the wicked, then "death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire."

This fire is material. It is a lake of fire. (Rev. xx. 14). A lake that burneth with fire and brimstone (Rev. xxi. 8), and from which the smoke of their torment ascendeth up really and visibly. (Rev. xiv. 11.) A fire whose action among the bodies of men will be so fierce and agonising that the Prophet enquires "who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?" etc. (Is. xxxiv. 14.) And whatever attempt may be made to resolve these expressions into figures of speech, the truth remains that the bodies of men will suffer sharp, fiery, and piercing pains in a future state for those acts of wickedness which they have instrumentally committed in this.

It is unquenchable. There are only two ways by which fire may be extinguished, by the consumption of the fuel that feeds it, or by the intervention of some opposite and superior principle. But in neither of these ways will the fire of hell be quenched since the bodies that endure it are not destroyed by it. And the hand that kindles it is that of an Almighty, ever-living, and immutable God.

2. The worm. Is that remorse which follows the corruption of sin. There is an analogy between the disease which corrupts and destroys the body and the sins that destroy the soul. The diseases which affect any part of the body spread through the whole, till reaching some vital part they extinguish life. After death follows the corruption and decay of the body, and out of the corruption those worms are bred which gnaw and feed upon the body until it is consumed. And sin is the disease of the soul; it mars it, it disorders it, it eats away its vitals, it brings upon it such a death as an immortal nature is alone capable of—that is, an utter incapacity of happiness.

Difference of sins is only like difference of diseases. Some sins eat as doth a canker, spreading a gangrene and loathsomeness even in this world, which in most other diseases only follows death. Others act on the soul as a burning fever does upon the body, mad-

dening it, urging it on with a kind of delirious fury to all kinds of desperate and enormous crimes, and bringing it by a short and rapid process to its death. And some sins there are which work upon the soul as consumption does upon the body, spreading a deceitful flush upon the cheek, and lighting an unearthly brightness in the eye to hide the progress of death within. There are in some men such traits of generosity—such sparks of true nobility—such elegant accomplishments of art and education as invest their sins with a most pernicious charm, and render them the very life and ornament of society, whilst all the while, amidst the applause of an admiring circle, their souls are dying and consuming away with the taint of corruption. But whatever diversity there may be in the forms and symptoms of this disease of the soul, the end is the same—the wages of sin—its desert, its necessary consequence is death. An incapacity for happiness is often observed in the case of abandoned sinners who live to an old age; and this is but the premonition of that eternal death by which the soul severed from God, and thoroughly deranged in all its points, is evermore incapable of hope or bliss. Out of this death and corruption of the soul springs, the worm—the power of self-reflection, which sees and feels its ruined condition, and despairs and agonises in the consciousness of its misery.

That remorse has its seat in the conscience—as in some battlefield the spot where the heat of the battle raged and the scale was turned and the issue decided is marked by heaps of the slain thickly strewn there—so is it in respect of the human conscience. It is there where the strife between good and evil principles is concentrated. There is such a struggle in the mind of every man before he becomes a reprobate, and the conscience is the seat of it. There the voice of God is heard—thither does the Word of God find its way with all its reproofs and admonitions and entreaties. There do all the motives to a life of piety bring their forces to bear—the attractions of heaven, the pleasures of piety, the power of good examples, the force of truth, all bear upon the conscience And there does the blessed spirit of God ply His work of grace—He illuminates—He draws—He awakens—He reproves in the conscience. And thither, also, the powers of evil repair—the pleasures of sin—the charms of the world—evil examples and solicitations, and behind all, "the God of this world" urging his claims to the possession of the heart. And here is the strife for the mastery; a dreadful contest, involving in its issue heaven or hell. And whenever this contest is decided against God, the place where the struggle has been, is marked by heaps of slain; more especially where the sinner has been brought under the sound of the Gospel, and a course of religious training. What broken vows, what rejected overtures, what resisted strivings, what stifled convictions, what quenched light attest the hard struggle that there was before the sinner was abandoned. All these fall like as many dead bodies around the sinner, and lie corrupting there, and out of this corruption the worm is bred; a worm whose gnawings will be the keenest where the previous strife has been the strongest.

It is even in this world the plague of sinners. Witness its effect in the case of a penitent sinner; of a murderer who has escaped all

human detection; of an abandoned sinner on his death-bed awakened and despairing.

But in the world to come its torment will be unmitigated and eternal. Here there may be such a thing as a seared conscience (1 Tim. iv. 2), but there no cautery will hold, and it will awake to a thrilling sensitiveness of guilt and pain. Here, there is much in the ardour of pursuit, in the delirious pleasure of enjoyment, and the profit accruing from sin, to stupefy the conscience and to lull its pain—but there, nothing but the guilt and corruption and sting remain—and its agencies are everlasting too. The worms that devour our bodies die when that which feeds them is consumed, but this worm is itself part of the seal which is immortal, and as neither can die so shall neither be separated; the worm never dies, and the soul can never shake it off; its gnawings are unappeasable, and the pangs eternal.

Apply—

I. Avoid sin.

One sin, and a secret one, may kill the soul. Beware of pleasant sins; they breed the worm, they end in fiery torments. Beware of profitable sins; what shall it profit a man to gain the world and lose his soul? Beware of plausible sins; there are many which plead natural inclination, utility, expediency, comparative harmlessness, but what of this? cut off the hand or the foot, pluck out the right eye, and rather suffer a lingering martyrdom than consent to one sin. Beware of hypocritical sins; such as may be done under a garb of sanctity out of a pretended zeal for religion, and with a show of piety.

Beware in time!!

You are forming your own eternity; you are sowing now what you shall reap hereafter, your life is ebbing, death is at your heels and the irrevocable judgment behind. As you dread the torments of a horrible eternity *fly from sin.*

II. Seek the pardon of your past sins.

You have sinned; you have broken God's law and rejected His merciful overtures by Jesus Christ, slighted His love and quenched His spirit. Your conscience tells you so. What means that restlessness, that inward dissatisfaction, that gloomy foreboding which sometimes afflicts you? What mean those checks and misgivings which so often impede and harass you in your sinful courses? What mean those awful horrors—those pangs which in your solitary moments trouble your spirits? They are the faint struggles of an overborne conscience—they are the stirrings of the worm within, they are the forewarnings of hell. What shall you do to be saved? Is there any hope, any chance of escape? There is but one way open to you, and that is to fly to Jesus Christ. He died for your sins; He lives to save you; He is exalted to give you repentance and remission of sins. His blood is precious; it has power to purge the conscience, it was shed for you, it may be applied to you personally by faith. Behold the Lamb of God; run to Him, and with a penitent confession of your guilt lay upon Him your sins, and He shall bear them away. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" from the sting of conscience,

from the corruption of sin, from the curse of the law, from the power of death, from the pains of hell. Believe and you shall now feel the peace and joy of faith. Believe, and you shall have everlasting life.

And while, in the course of his ministry at Hackney, Mr. Vasey sounded forth his solemn warnings in the hearing of the unconverted members of his congregation, for "the mourner in Zion," he had abounding assurances of comfort and hope, and was a minister of instruction and edification to those who, "laying aside all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil-speaking, as new-born babes" desired the sincere milk of the Word that they might grow thereby; whilst those who had attained to a considerable growth in grace, he encouraged to aim at the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. He dealt out to all his hearers food suited to their capacities and needs; the tempted and tried were directed to a sympathising Saviour for succour and consolation; the poor and needy had offered to them the unsearchable riches of Christ; and the man of worldly wealth and position had set before him his responsibilities and duties in terms not to be mistaken or gainsaid. A sermon which he wrote during this period on "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," is an admirable summary of the obligations of the latter class in reference to public matters. Though Mr. Vasey carefully avoided introducing political subjects into the pulpit, he never hesitated to advise his flock as to their action in great national crises. Under the above-mentioned text he remarks:—"The Scriptures contain a full and complete directory for the common affairs of life. The instructions which they give, however, are not always *specific* or applied to the details of our conduct, but *general*, giving us certain broad principles upon which we are to act, and leaving us to apply them ourselves to circumstances as they arise. There is something left to Christian intelligence and prudence; hence the duty inculcated by the text. We are to prove 'all things'—that is, to test or try by the principles of God's Word all questions of duty, and if we find anything that is good, that is con-

formable to these principles, we are to 'hold it fast,' and to abide by it, under all difficulties and hinderances." Then he goes on to test the question—"Is it right for Christian people to seek after and to occupy positions of eminence and influence amongst their fellows in civil and political affairs?" And, lastly, to point out the spirit in which this should be done. In reply to the question, Mr. Vasey says:—"To maintain that the obligation of civil duties is cancelled by religion would be to deprive that religion, of an important sphere for its exercise, and a humiliating acknowledgment of its insufficiency. Notice the extreme to which Popery has carried this doctrine by restricting the use of the word 'religious' to such persons only as have renounced the duties and obligations of domestic and civil life. The religion of Christ has made it imperative on His followers to use every degree of influence they possess for the advancement of His kingdom upon earth. It is no disparagement to the view of Christian responsibility with regard to civil duties, that the temptations which surround these high positions are greater, and the peril of apostacy more aggravated, nor even to quote cases in which persons who have been so elevated have suffered spiritual damage, and even lost their religion. For it is true, in fact, of every addition to our responsibilities, that it increases our temptations and perils—*e.g.*, marriage and the parental relation; but unless it can be also proved that it lessens the supply of grace, and consequent power to resist and conquer, such an argument has no force. This view of the obligation of Christian men of wealth and influence is further strengthened by the consideration that the opposite principle of conduct would leave the earth in the hands of the wicked. Nor must we lose sight of the truth so plainly set forth in Scripture—that it is the design of God ultimately to bestow the dominion of the earth upon the righteous." In reference to the spirit and manner in which this object should be pursued, Mr. Vasey says:—"What is to be cultivated? (1) A single eye to the glory of God. (2) A firm resolution to

keep a good conscience. (3) An enlightened and upright regard to the public good. What is to be avoided? (1) Undue excitement. (2) Personal animosity. (3) Permanent ill-will."

That Mr. Vasey continued the practice of out-door preaching as he had opportunity is evidenced in the earlier pages of this chapter; and that he did not fail to enter every opened door of usefulness, is demonstrated by the fact that he responded to a request to preach in one of the theatres situated in one of the most densely populated parts of London. On these occasions he rejoiced to reach the ears of people not familiar with the preaching of Gospel truth.

In February of 1862 he visited his three old Yorkshire Circuits, for the purpose of assisting on anniversary occasions. He greatly enjoyed mingling with his old friends at Hull, and from thence he proceeded to Leeds, from which place he wrote:—"Headingley, Feb. 5th. Arrived here at 12, and after depositing my luggage went on to the cemetery. Found the grave in first-rate order, and send you a little flower growing on it. Mrs. Andrews has promised to attend to the grave, and to send you some flowers when they are out in bloom. Felt glad that the interval between our re-union has diminished by 2½ years, and afresh determined to live so as to secure a happy meeting. I find Mr. Punshon is going to launch his lecture on 'Macaulay' in the New Town Hall here to-morrow evening, and shall go to hear him."

From Claremont, Bradford, he writes Feb. 8th:—"I am here at last at my journey's end. I have been incessantly occupied in calling upon old friends, and have been greatly cheered by the reception which has been given to me. It would have done you good to see the heartiness with which the people greeted me in the Victoria Hall. Some strangers who were near me appeared quite surprised at the extent of my acquaintance; nearly every one who came up appearing to know me. I have fixed to preach to-morrow night (D.V.) from 'Save yourselves,' and in the morning it will either be 'I have

waited for thy salvation,' or 'The seven seals.' I do hope and pray that my visit may be made a blessing to the people in an extraordinary degree. . . .

"Feb. 10th.—Well, I have got through my work, and am thankful to feel that I am no worse this morning for it. As an index of my strength compared with what it used to be, the result is not favourable. My friends generally thought me much less vigorous in voice than formerly, and I felt that I should be unequal now to any sustained work in such large chapels. Nevertheless, I had two good times as to spiritual power and personal comfort, and the people seemed to enjoy the services exceedingly. Congregations remarkably good both times, and at night particularly so. Yet in the morning your old test of a good congregation would apply, for you would have seen a good row of heads against the side wall. I held a prayer meeting, and we had several penitents and a large attendance. One man found peace before I left, and they were still carrying on the meeting. . . . I cannot say more than that I feel the usual pleasure at the idea of so soon being back to my beloved wife and happy home."

In June of the same year Mr. Vasey paid another visit to Leeds, to assist at the opening services of the new chapel at Roscoe-place. On which occasion he also preached in his old pulpit at Brunswick Chapel.

In reference to these services, he writes, "I enjoyed my walk down to Brunswick, and got through my sermon very comfortably. We had the chapel rather more than half full, and had a good melting time from the men that 'sigh and cry,' and I hope good was done. Many people flocked into the vestry to shake hands with me. I felt a good deal exhausted after the morning service, but got a little rest, and was freshened up rather towards evening. The chapel was crowded in every part, and the communion filled with forms, in the aisles also, and presented a very pleasing and imposing appearance. I went in no very good trim for my work, but found my usual succour from above, in the pulpit, and had a good warm time of

it—free in spirit, ready in utterance, and clear and connected in thought, with a good glow of love and zeal in my heart. The people were pleased, and shouted out several times to my heart's content. We had a lively prayer-meeting, and several penitents, so that the ice was thoroughly broken. This morning I visited the grave, which was in beautiful order; there are some pinks just opening out, and altogether I counted about twenty different plants on the plot. Whether it was this visit or not I do not know, but my heart became so painful and troublesome that I was obliged to ask Mrs. Jackson to let me lie down a quarter of an hour on her sofa."

In July he left home to attend the Conference held this year at Camborne. The hearty Methodistic spirit of the Cornish people was strikingly displayed in their enthusiastic reception of the ministers, and their appreciation of their services on all occasions. With reference to Mr. Vasey's labours at the time we quote a few extracts from his letters. He writes on July 28th, 1862: —"Had a good day yesterday, preached at the Centenary Chapel in the morning, from 'the men that sigh and cry,' and had a good time. In the chapel I saw Thomas Jackson, who had come to hear me for the sake of my father's memory, but came into the vestry afterwards to thank me with tears in his eyes for my sermon. In the afternoon went into a neglected part of the town and preached in the open air to a large and attentive congregation of about four or five hundred people, from 'Seek ye the Lord.' I had a very good time and enjoyed the service exceedingly. In the evening went to Wesley Chapel and heard Dr. Hannah preach; stayed the prayer meeting, addressed the people, went round amongst them and worked till I was forced to leave off quite tired. There were several penitents, some of whom found peace. Am very glad that we have got the ice broken at the commencement."

Again on August 1st he writes, "I left off yesterday amidst the bustle of the prayer-meeting. I thought the door would have been burst open by the crowd; we

were obliged to let them in a quarter of an hour before the time. The preachers called upon to pray were P. Mc'Owan, Dr. Osborne, Dr. Jobson, W. L. Thornton, and T. Vasey. They all seemed to have considerable liberty excepting T. V., who was rather flat. The meeting however was considered on the whole first-rate. I went up into the gallery and conversed with some of the old women who said it was heaven upon earth, and I have no doubt that would be the general feeling."

Mr. Vasey enjoyed this Conference exceedingly, and returned home to engage afresh in the duties, ordinary and extraordinary, with which the year was incessantly occupied. He had secured the services of a Home missionary for the new station at Enfield Highway, and gained, through this arrangement, assistance in the labours of the Circuit.

For some months past the more urgent symptoms of Mrs. Vasey's illness had been so far relieved that she could again move about a little among her family, but the latter months of this year found her in circumstances of increased suffering and feebleness. Nevertheless, Christmas was a very happy season in the household. The following characteristic letter was addressed to his sister at this period:—

London, 30*th Dec.*, 1862.

. . . I hope by this time you are better, and able to enjoy the mercies which providence has bestowed upon you, and to feel a grateful spirit for the unspeakable gift which we commemorate at this season of the year. That good gift may well throw our trials into the shade and make us for a while forget them, whilst we consider how many blessings, temporal and spiritual and eternal are wrapped up in that all-comprising benefit. We had a very happy Christmas with the children, and a beautiful Christmas tree. We all join in wishing you a happy new year, and many happy returns of them. Let us live from day to day in dependence upon God, and trust Him for the future, whilst we endeavour to enjoy and improve the present. . . .

Mr. Vasey, in the first month of 1863 visited the Channel Islands on Home Missionary Deputation service. Here he found his knowledge of French useful, as the following extract from a letter, written while there, in reference to a meeting he attended, proves. He says, "All the speeches

except my own were in French, as were the hymns, and I expected to feel rather awkward, both in listening to the French speeches, and in speaking myself. I was, however, pleased to find that I could understand most of what was said, and I ventured to give a *resumé* of the principal topics of each subject, which was pronounced very correct. This of course enabled me to shape my own speech accordingly; when my turn came I spoke slowly and in simple sentences, and was pleased to find, both from the countenances of the people at the time, and from what they said afterwards, I had been well understood."

Though the season of the year was unfavourable, yet Mr. Vasey derived pleasure and benefit from this entire change of scenery and society; but in April he had a distressing attack of nervous exhaustion, which, for a while, seriously crippled his energies, and made it necessary for him to try the bracing influences of sea air. To this end he spent a week or two at Eastbourne. In a letter to his sister from thence, we note his extreme depression at this period, which happily yielded to the means used for his invigoration. He writes:—"Eastbourne, April 29th, 1863.— . . . I have been nearly a week here, but to very little purpose. My spirits seem to have gone irrecoverably; everything seems wearisome and insipid, and the least mental exertion followed by distressing exhaustion. I hope, in the providence of God, Harrogate may be designed to recruit my nervous strength, or the work of the ministry will soon become insupportable, especially in the present condition of the Christian Church, when so few signs of spiritual good are visible. . . ."

The foregoing allusion to Harrogate refers to the next year's sphere of labour, he having accepted an invitation to that place, subject to the approval of Conference.

As the time drew near for his farewell to the Hackney Circuit, he received, by means of letters, several most gratifying assurances of good received through his ministry; and a purse of gold conveyed, in a more

substantial form, the expression of the attachment and respect of his friends.

The added letter gave him great encouragement.

June 23rd, 1863.

DEAR AND REVEREND SIR.

First, I wish to apologise for the liberty I am taking in addressing myself to you, more especially as I am, I have no doubt, quite a stranger to you, but I thought I would write a few lines, not only for my pleasure, but for your encouragement. Sir, I have often had a wish to write or speak to you. I was living in Leeds at the time that you were there; I used to attend Brunswick chapel and Sunday-school, and met in Mrs. Bankes's class. I was fourteen years of age when I first commenced to do so, but it was not till a few months after that I found my Saviour. You will remember, sir, how God poured His Holy Spirit upon that Sunday-school; it was a happy and hopeful thing to see so many young people seeking their Saviour. I had felt my sins to be a great burden to me; I felt I was a great sinner, and longed to be happy. It was on the twentieth of March, 1859, I went to the Sunday-school, and in the afternoon, after school, Mr. Flitch wished to have a prayer-meeting. I stayed, many of them found peace, but I went home unhappy. I was going to hear you preach in the evening, and before I went to chapel, I knelt down and prayed that God would forgive my sins. After I got to chapel, I could not help thinking that you were speaking to me, every word seemed for me in your prayers and sermon. After service, I was so pleased when you said there would be a prayer-meeting. I went into the vestry, and you spoke so earnestly to those who were not forgiven, I thought that if I did not accept the invitation God had given me, I might never be saved, so I knelt down at the penitent form, and in answer to your prayers I rose rejoicing in my Saviour. I still have a longing desire to serve and love Him. I felt very very much encouraged on Sunday last at Stoke Newington chapel while you were preaching; also at the love feast, I felt as if I could get up and tell you not to be so discouraged, but I trust God will prosper you in the good work in which you are engaged. I know that you have great cause to rejoice, and I hope you will have still greater. I thought I would ask your advice about being baptized; I was not when an infant: it is one of God's commands, and we are told to obey them. Hoping you are quite well, and your family, and that you will excuse the liberty I have taken,

Believe me, sincerely,

EMMA S——.

I know you are fond of flowers, sir, for I have heard you say so; please excuse me sending these.

The following extract is from a letter addressed to Mr. Vasey by a young lady in the Hackney Circuit, and affords another testimony, from among many, to

his usefulness amongst young people whilst labouring there:—

"Dear Sir,—I must gratefully acknowledge the pleasure and benefit I have derived from your valuable teaching. Through it I have seen new beauty in the Bible, and have caught many bright glimpses of Jesus. We sincerely wish we could enjoy your ministry for many years."

We close this chapter by reminiscences and impressions of Mr. Vasey's ministerial course in the North London Circuit, kindly supplied by the Rev. James Chalmers, M.A., one of his colleagues, and James Smetham, Esq., of Stoke Newington.

Mr. Chalmers says:—

"My acquaintance with Mr. Vasey began in September, 1861. I was then appointed to labour with him in the Hackney Circuit, London, and for two years was his colleague there in the work of the ministry.

"Up to that time I had known little of Mr. Vasey; only so much as I had casually gathered from public report, and from a glimpse or two of him at Conference. An able, energetic, strong-willed man, I thought him to be; more commanding respect than likely to win affection.

"My association with him in circuit work, however, soon made me amend this estimate. I found in him excellencies I little expected—kindness, affection, considerate care, brotherly courtesy, and a zeal for God most intense and true. Of his ability, of his cultivation, of his extensive reading, of his wide acquaintance with men and things, of his noble and robust Christian theology, I presume not to speak; others will doubtless do ample justice to these and other qualities in his character. I may, however, say that all these properties seemed hallowed in him, and consecrated to Christ by the holy faith and fervour of his later years. He was of a refined mind, yet withal of a fervent spirit; he was well read in the literature of the day, yet of strongest faith in the verities of the Gospel; he was a very catholic Christian, yet a most devoted Methodist; he kept himself abreast

of the times in all great questions and projected schemes, yet never tamed by his public spiritedness in his pulpit and pastoral labours. On the Saturday you might have seen him wrestling doughtily with the strongest in an education debate, and on the Sunday found him in the evening directing penitents at the communion rail, or in the vestry, and none more earnest in that work than he.

"In the pulpit he ever seemed to be doing his best. There was no flagging unless such as occasioned by illness. He was much the same in a small as in a large congregation; as earnest on the week-night as on the Sabbath; always rich in discourse, often impassioned in appeal. His sermons always had a fine body of evangelical truth in them. This was the fuel in which usually his enthusiasm took fire and kindled into divine fervour. He was then all aglow in his work—roused, excited, impassioned; his face now became vividly red, his eye glanced with piercing keenness, his voice rose to a hoarse shrillness, nature looked overstrained in him, and as if it might give way at any moment and break down. He argued, he declaimed, he denounced, he pleaded; the people were careless, and he must rouse them; sinners were perishing, and he must labour to save them; his message might, to some, be their last call to God, and he must do his utmost to make them receive it. He was mighty at such times. None sat unmoved under his passionate eloquence. Many trembled and turned to the Lord.

"One Sunday evening in the winter of 1863, he preached in ——— Chapel, from the text 'Save yourselves.' It was during a course of special services, and he took that text as the theme of a powerful appeal to the careless, the impenitent, and those at ease in Zion, on the need of instant and earnest effort on their part to obtain salvation. Most strongly did he put this point, and most earnestly did he press it. It was an extempore discourse, and may have contained statements which Mr. Vasey, in calmer moments, would have qualified; but spoken in the rush of the sermon, they were more in

place than more balanced but less impressive words would have seemed. He preached, as an apostle may be imagined to have preached, all on fire to save souls. The congregation were awe-struck, and some, as at Pentecost, were pierced to the heart. It is remembered by many to this day.

"In pastoral work he was diligent. He watched over the congregations as a master shepherd over his flocks; he thought of them habitually, he prayed for them daily, and studied to give them their meat in due season. The duties of the superintendency much interfered with his labours in this department of his work, yet he went among the people as he found opportunity, and often saw them in their own homes. The quarterly visitation of the classes was no mere routine with him; it was a responsible oversight of the house of God, and faithfully and affectionately did he discharge it. His words were fitly spoken on such occasions, and carried strength and comfort to the people's hearts. The forward found effectual restraint in his monitions, but he was an encouragement always to the true-hearted. He never preached *at* the people; he was incapable of such an use of pulpit discourse as that; but he preached *to* them, adapting himself to their capacities, and fitting his subjects to what he deemed to be their needs. He carried them much in his heart, he was with them in their troubles, and he often prayed for them. He kept a list of persons in the circuit (so he told the writer, touching his pastoral work in that circuit), and that he brought them one by one statedly before the Lord in prayer. On that list there were names of persons who, from one cause or other, thought hard of Mr. Vasey, deeming him unfriendly towards them, or unfair. How they would have changed their thoughts of him had they but known him as he was!

"The presence of such a chief pastor at the head of the circuit made itself felt throughout it. It was felt, in all the societies, that a strong but conscientious and kindly hand was upon them, and order prevailed, and

peace and prosperity. The discipline he maintained was pure and healthy. The balance he held between rival parties was unimpeachable because even. He was far above any partyism; he could not be swayed but by a pure and right influence. His face was turned as a flint against the disturber of Zion. Self-asserting persons would fume and writhe under the sharp rein he put upon their doings, but there was no check to those that wished to work for God; he was all encouragement to such, and gave them his counsel and blessing.

"His intense earnestness set him rather strongly against any pulpit ministrations that did not bear directly on converting or saving work. On one occasion two or three of us being together, and some one mentioning that a sermon had been preached in one of the chapels on the text, 'Are they not all ministering spirits?' 'That is a fancy text,' said Mr. Vasey, with a somewhat sarcastic smile, that told how seldom he turned aside to such subjects, and how little he thought them calculated to arrest or edify the people. He put vigorous Gospel truth into his sermons, and he craved for the same thing in such sermons as he heard from others, and he could ill brook that it should be diluted with profuse verbiage. After hearing a sermon of this sort where words were plentiful but Gospel thoughts few, he expressed his opinion in the characteristic remark, 'He spreads his butter thin.' Preaching at the opening of a new chapel some years ago, he announced his subject in some such way as this—'Some of you will be expecting me to preach a great sermon to-day; I shall do no such thing. I mean to preach to you a plain, Gospel discourse;" which he did;—a plain, direct discourse, calling upon them to repent and turn to the Lord.

"Prayer was a habit with him. He aimed at the Apostle's direction to 'pray without ceasing;' praying 'in season, and out of season.' I heard him say in a sermon that he prayed much as he walked along the streets, partly to keep his soul pure amid what he heard and saw there, and partly for the poor, wretched, lost

ones he met. All his work was entered on in the spirit of prayer. His pastoral work was gone about in the same way. He told us, one day, how he had just prayed two hundred pounds out of a certain person who had much, but gave little. Mr. Vasey had a chapel scheme in hand at the time, and had set down this person for the above-mentioned sum in his list. He took 'bus outside to see him about it. As it happened, the gentleman got into the same 'bus by the way. There they were, then, Mr. Vasey on the top, Mr. —— inside. On that oratory did the good minister pray for the passenger inside, asking the Lord to open his heart and dispose him to give two hundred pounds. Arrived at their destination, they left the 'bus and entered the gentleman's house. Mr. Vasey broached his scheme, and asked how much he was prepared to contribute towards it. After some consideration, the reply was, 'I will give you two hundred pounds.' The very sum Mr. Vasey had noted in his book—had asked the Lord to dispose him to give. He was very careful of his *spirit* on the Sabbath. He studied to keep himself in the spirit of his work on the Lord's-day. He reined up his mind when it would wander on secular things; he turned conversation when he felt it disturbing or out of place; and thus conserved his spiritual force for the sanctuary."

The following is from the pen of Mr. Smetham:—

"The chief impression made by his whole intercourse with us at Stoke Newington was this in particular—his *devotedness*. It was manifest in everything in which he engaged among us. Though his home was at some distance, for example, he seemed to desire to do full justice to his part in the meetings of leaders and stewards after the week-night preaching, and never cut short any such meeting while his presence and help could do service there. At meetings of this kind, too, it was pleasant to observe his spirit and manner; the kindliness, tact, cheerfulness, and earnestness he threw into the counsels and discussions of the hour. His interest in the social means of grace was apparent when he took the conduct

of a love-feast. He brought the true Methodist spirit and simplicity into it, and was able to infuse the warmth of his own soul into the souls of others. At the various anniversary meetings, great and small, he was always to be relied on. Never tame, never dull, never cold, always thinking it worth while to put forth strength equal to the needs of the case, enough and to spare. This CONSTANCY was, indeed, a very noble and charming feature of his character, combined, as it was, with a beaming simplicity very pleasant to remember, and very animating wherever he was present.

"Still his greatest sphere of power was the pulpit. It is the solemn and delightful total effect of his ministry of the Word that rises up most strongly before my mind, and can never be forgotten. His preaching from the first day to the last, from the first moment of each service to the benediction, was all life, all earnestness—earnestness changeful in its colour, but every colour a colour of fire. His intense belief in the great truths of the Gospel was most manifest. His hearers might be doubtful or indifferent in themselves, but they could not fail to see that at least *he* believed, and therefore spake. His imagination was lively, and his turn for mental culture was obvious; but it was just as obvious that he so deeply felt the overwhelming moral importance of life as a sphere of probation on which the issues of eternity hang, that he was disposed to subordinate every subtlety of thought, or fineness of imagery, or elegance of expression, to the one object of touching the conscience and arousing the souls of men to earnestness of Christian action and duty. His personal ideal of the Divine life was a marked one, and not difficult to trace. It was that of the 'good soldier of Jesus Christ.' It was not the contemplative or argumentative side of truth that he occupied. He had not the narrowness of view which either despised or denounced other modes of capacity or temperament; but for himself, and those on whom he was specially fitted to act, there was no doubt as to his purposes and tastes. He belonged, so to speak, to the cavalry regiments of

the host, ranging 'the land on' their white horses, and assaulting the foe with sudden intrepidity and success. No subjects of thought and speech delighted him more than such as frequently occupied him in our pulpit, the messages to the Churches of Asia, their solemn calls to attention and self-scrutiny, their discriminating analysis of the good and evil blending in the various Churches in their character and works, the personal presence of Christ in their midst as the overlooker, the judge, the avenger, the rewarder, the mystic glory of the things promised to them that love His appearing. Among these, his predominating conception was that of some vast Armageddon, in which he gathered forces of good and evil met for a last encounter, followed by that victory of which no doubt had ever existed in the hearts of the faithful; and by long drawn processions of triumph, in which the victorious lion of the tribe of Judah was the conspicuous figure, and attended by all the good and brave, sweeping endlessly on through the uplifted, everlasting gates. To those who sat and listened to such a series of discourses, the pleasure, the profit, and the responsibility were alike more than usually great; and his image will chiefly remain in many minds as one thus contending earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints, and recalling Bunyan's description of the ideal minister of truth,—'It had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in its hand, the law of truth written on its lips, the world was behind its back; it stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over its head.'"

CHAPTER XI.

HARROGATE.

THE imperative removal of Mrs. Vasey, in connection with the change of circuits, had been contemplated by Mr. Vasey with deep solicitude, and for it he made the most anxious and tender arrangements, in which he was aided by kind and devoted friends at Hackney; thus every appliance likely to diminish the hazard and wearisomeness of the journey was provided. Through the merciful care of Divine providence this was conducted in safety, and the joy and thankfulness of Mr. Vasey overflowed when, on their arrival, he could welcome his wife to their new and comfortable home.

The feelings of kindliness and confidence manifested towards Mr. Vasey in his reception at Harrogate were fully reciprocated by himself. His new sphere was, in many respects, entirely different from any he had previously occupied. Regarding it as supplying him with means of greatly augmented and extended usefulness, he assumed its duties with unbounded satisfaction and pleasure.

The Harrogate Conference appointment being that of a single minister "who shall change on one Sunday in every four weeks with the minister of the Leeds Circuits successively," Mr. Vasey had thus afforded him the happiness of again breaking the bread of life amongst his old friends; occasions not less valued by them than by himself. The three intervening Sabbaths on which he ministered in the same pulpit consecutively he prized as furnishing opportunities of sustained pulpit power over his own charge at Harrogate, and of influencing the everlasting destinies of the bulk of his congregation,

ever varying, during many months of the year, through the influx of visitors in search of pleasure and physical invigoration. To the strangers amongst his hearers he endeavoured to commend the religion of Jesus as the only true, solid, and enduring source of happiness and health to the soul. Nor did his efforts on behalf of this class cease in the pulpit; he gladly responded to requests to see them at their lodgings, always striving to make his visits spiritually profitable to them. Thus, whilst Mr. Vasey was uniformly diligent in all his pastoral relations, and watchful to take occasion of every opportunity of promoting the prosperity of his circuit in every department, he was not neglectful of the apostolic injunction, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers," in the highest sense.

But though his course in Harrogate was a laborious and an eminently useful one, it did not lack the concomitant trials incident to a faithful ministry. In the faithful rebuke of sin, in arbitrating between parties of opposite interests, in the occasional exercise of discipline, in the oft-lamented want of success proportioned to the expenditure of effort, in personal illness, and continued domestic affliction, his spirit was not seldom tried; but "he endured as seeing Him who is invisible," having "respect unto the recompense of the reward." It is unnecessary here to enter in detail into the nature, extent, and effects of Mr. Vasey's labours during his three years' sojourn in Harrogate, as these will be demonstrated in many recollections kindly contributed from various quarters, which will find a place in the pages of this chapter. We will, however, add here the copy of a precious document discovered amongst Mr. Vasey's private papers; and this we do with deep feelings of reverential emotion, as unveiling that which seems too sacred for the public eye, yet which, as disclosing his true catholic spirit, and the secret of Mr. Vasey's ministerial power and success may be read with both interest and profit. From an early period of his ministry he was accustomed to keep a file of daily prayers, but

the one now given was only drawn up at the commencement of his life in Harrogate, the names being afterwards supplied, which, of course, are not added.

TOPICS FOR PRIVATE PRAYER FOR EACH DAY OF THE WEEK, AND LIST OF PERSONS FOR WHOM INTERCESSION IS TO BE MADE.

Harrogate, September 1863. THOMAS VASEY.

"Praying always with all supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Eph. vi. 18.

"Lord, save me." Matt. xiv. 30.

Sunday.—My own soul; to preach in the spirit of love; dependence on God; mistrust of myself, and preparation, &c. &c. Ask for special insight into my subject, and for sympathy with the souls of the people.

For all Christian ministers and congregations, especially the following. (Here follow the names of old circuits). For all Christian missionaries.

Monday.—For a blessing on my own labours yesterday; and if I have had a good day to be saved from self-complacency and undue self-reliance. If discouraged, to plead the promise. Isa. lv. 10—13.

For my relatives—dwelling on their circumstances.

Tuesday.—For my own Circuit in all its interests.

For my colleagues (by name).

For all the officers, stewards, leaders, local preachers, Sunday-school teachers, tract distributors, prayer leaders, and visitors of the sick.

For the following unconverted members of the congregation:—

* * * * * * *

For the day-school and the teacher.

For the members of my class.

For the young people of my Bible-class.

For my chief coadjutors in the work of God.

For the new converts.

Wednesday.—For Methodism; the uncorrupt preservation of its doctrines, especially salvation by faith for all; witness of the Spirit; entire holiness. For the maintenance of its aggressive spirit.

For Methodist institutions and agencies; Theological Colleges; Normal Training School for teachers; week-day and Sunday-schools; and especially for the great missionary work; for a blessing on the Jubilee movement. For the Methodist preachers, that they may be upheld in their integrity, moral excellence, and spirituality, with a special unction of the Holy Ghost.

For the young men, and for the Supernumeraries; also, for Students in the Colleges.

For the Methodist people, that they may be saved from a worldly and lukewarm spirit; may have the spirit of individual zeal and effort, and be kept in unity and peace.

Special prayer for rich Methodists and for educated young men to be brought out into the ministry; also spiritual gifts for leaders, &c.

Thursday.—For the Church universal.

The Church of England, increase of purity, spirituality and unity.

Dissenters; preservation of the truth; increase of experimental religion; to be saved from a spirit of political partisanship.

Various branches of Methodism at home and abroad.

For the Church of Rome, that it may be recovered from its apostasy; and for all good people who may be in it; that they may come out of it before the final plagues of God come upon it.

For the Greek Church, that the Scriptures may be more widely circulated among its members, and its rites and ceremonies be conformed to the Word of God.

For the Armenian and Coptic Churches of Germany, Sweden, and Denmark.

For the Moravians.

Friday.—Topics for daily prayer.

For my own family. For my dear wife, that she may be comforted and strengthened both in body and soul, and have a sanctified use of her affliction.

For each of my children by name, that they may have converting and restraining grace; be preserved in health, and helped in their education.

For our domestic servant, that she may be blessed religiously by coming to our service, and be made happy in the love of God.

For each of the following kind friends. . . .

Saturday.—A thankful commemoration of departed friends, with prayer for an ultimate reunion. (Here follow names of departed relatives and friends.)

For direction as to choice of subjects for preaching on Sunday, and for a perfect moral preparation by freedom from irregular passions, inferior or impure motives, &c. Special prayer for friends in affliction or adversity, by name.

In December of 1863 Mr. Vasey's heart was greatly rejoiced by the receipt of a letter from one of his sons at school, containing news of his conversion, to which he wrote the succeeding reply:—

Harrogate, Dec. 1st, 1863.

. . . Your letter received this morning has given me more pleasure than if it had been the gift of £1,000. I am glad to find that you are making your way in the school by diligence and study; but most of all that you have found "the Pearl of great price." This is indeed your richest treasure, and you must guard it more carefully than you would gold or silver. You need never lose what you have gained, but may rather go on adding to your knowledge and joy from day to day, if you only look to God every moment for help. The same grace which has saved you, can keep you all your days, and bring you safe to heaven at last. You are now in a fair way to see Sissy, Arthur, and Samuel, and I believe by this time they all know of it, and are made

happier by the thought. What a blessed meeting we shall have, when we all get safely landed on "the everlasting shore."

You will, I dare say, find out that the work of grace is not quite complete in your soul, and sometimes bad feelings and tempers may stir in your heart and strive for the mastery again, but you must not be discouraged on this account.

Your sins are now pardoned, but this is only the beginning of religion. Your soul needs to be renewed in all its powers and faculties, and this is the great work the Holy Spirit waits to accomplish in you. Pray earnestly that He may create within you a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within you.

And may the great and good Father of spirits evermore preserve and bless you. . . .

The following letter conveyed the assurance to Mr. Vasey that his labours in the Lord were not unproductive of good results to strangers visiting Harrogate, and though not by a learned pen, was a source of great encouragement to him :—

January 5th, 1864.

DEAR MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

I have thought of you in my prayers ever since I heard you preach that blessed sermon ("Remember Lot's Wife"). It was made a blessing to me, and a friend that was with me very often speaks of it; he received much good from it; to tell you plain, he says he never heard anything like it before. He is now rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Go on in the glorious work, and the Lord will reward you here, and crown you with an everlasting crown of glory hereafter. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy, and if I do not see you down here no more, I know I shall see you above. Glory be to the Lamb. I hope the people of Harrogate will see the great privilege they have, that thousands and millions have not. . . .

With the approach of winter chills Mr. Vasey had a return of his bronchial affection, which was supplemented by a dangerous attack of *angina pectoris* at the commencement of the year. Through the kind and skilful attentions of Dr. Myrtle, with the blessing of Almighty God, Mr. Vasey was soon enabled to resume his duties. He refers to this illness in a letter to a young minister.

Feb. 13th, 1864.

. . . I should have replied sooner to your note of the 23rd ult., but have been laid up for a fortnight with a very obstinate attack of *angina pectoris*, which has very nearly put a stop to my breath, life, and work. I am slowly recovering but have not done any work, and shall not attempt till to-morrow week.

I am glad to find that you are alive, and at your proper work of trying to save souls. Try to do the devil and his kingdom as much damage as you can in every way; and if you cannot get a new chapel as soon as you could wish, improve every opportunity for the aggressive warfare by which the kingdom of Christ may be extended.

If you cannot fight with regular armies, and lay siege to the strongholds of Satan in regular form, let us be content to harass the forces of the enemy by any kind of guerilla warfare that we can wage. Our time is short, let us make the most of it. I like your printed papers, and think they are likely to do good; they are conceived in a right spirit, and the execution is creditable. . . . May the Lord bless and strengthen you. . . .

On July 8th a sixth son was added to the family circle; and though, through the feebleness of his constitution, and the increased illness of his mother, his birth brought new anxieties, yet such was Mr. Vasey's love of children that the advent of this child was welcomed as had been that of each of his brothers and sisters.

The same month Mr. Vasey's presence was required at the Conference held at Bradford in 1864, under the presidency of the Rev. W. L. Thornton, M.A. At this Conference fresh duties devolved upon Mr. Vasey in his position of Representative of the Leeds District. To these, reference is made in a letter home:—

Bradford, August 12th, 1864.

MY DARLING WIFE,

I gladly hailed your last kind and loving letter, and notwithstanding your self-reproaches as to the correspondence, this Conference, must give you unqualified praise for having under the circumstances done so much in this way; your letters have been a great comfort to me and serve to reconcile me to my temporary and inevitable absence from home. I find it is as I stated yesterday,—Conference sits to-night and will not close till 2 p.m. to-morrow. . . I shall not go to Redcar, I think, until later, trusting to home and Harrogate air for the refreshment I need. We only confirmed the stations at 2 o'clock to-day, and I went out immediately and walked round the chapel to realise the fact that there was no one waiting to dun me about appointments. It is a great relief to me to have got rid of this work so full of toil, anxiety and excitement; and to think that upon the whole the wants of my district, and the wishes of my men have been fairly met. I have got through this duty better than I expected, and have gained much valuable information as to men and circuits, which will fit me for further usefulness. Upon the whole I hope that I have not done any harm, and may perhaps have done a little good. Certainly I have great reason to be satisfied with the good opinion of my brethren, and with their public manifestations of

it during Conference. . . . Please to give my love to Sarah Anne, Lizzie, and the children. I was pleased with the notes of Tom and Lillie. Give Freddy and baby a kiss apiece from me. Much love to you, my darling, from,

Your faithful lover,

TOM.

In the succeeding Conference year, Mr. Vasey's life was daily filled up with blessed toil in his endeavours to extend the kingdom of his Master. Every aggressive agency within his influence had his attention, and was stimulated to greater activity and progress. Recognising the importance of maintaining the efficiency of the Harrogate pulpit, he was careful to secure the best possible supplies, in his occasional absences from home, and for anniversary services; and being now in the enjoyment of augmented opportunities for study, he rearranged sermons composed under fewer advantages, and added largely to his existing stock. No circuit was favoured with greater variety and power in his ministrations. The former is sufficiently attested by a list of texts preserved of this period, of which 302 were preached in the Harrogate chapel alone. He had always kept on hand a large assortment of discourses on the subjects of the great Christian Festivals, and a valuable course of sermons on the passion and death of the Redeemer. These he delighted to bring out at the proper season, and in their regular order; and this was done to the great interest and edification of his hearers. One, on the "Rent Vail," may be noticed as having been preached with remarkably good effect, and remembered, to profit, not only in Harrogate, but on many Missionary occasions in various places. This we would gladly have introduced, had not our space been limited.

Nor was the "feast of fat things" reserved for the Sabbath day; the board was as richly and abundantly spread at the week-night services, these always being pre-eminently adapted to build up believers on their most holy faith.

Mr. Vasey took great interest in the Sunday and Day-schools, visiting them both regularly and frequently; the

former he re-organised with a view to its increased efficiency, and effected many improvements in the latter, originating also a scheme for a new Day-school, towards the erection of which a few hundred pounds were raised. The developing and carrying out of the project, when circumstances favoured, he left to a future successor.

It must, however, be noted that Mr. Vasey's labours at Harrogate were frequently conducted under great personal illness and suffering, continued family affliction, and severe anxiety in connection with the affairs of relatives.

In July, 1865, Mr. Vasey attended the sittings of the Birmingham Conference. Some extracts from letters of this period may probably be interesting.

Cherry Street Chapel, Birmingham, July 19th, 1865. . . . There is nothing of a very interesting nature going on, but we are making satisfactory progress with the stations, and are likely, if no unforeseen difficulty occurs, to get through them by Friday night. I am thankful to say that I keep all right, and am free from pain. Have spent half-an-hour reflecting upon my position twenty-one years ago, in this chapel, when I stood up in fear and trembling to go through my examination for ordination. I hope I may have done some good in some way since then, but I fear it has been very little, though I have certainly gone through a great deal of work and trouble. May the Lord make me more useful in His vineyard! Have got to my new quarters in the Bristol Road, My host is very kind, and promises to drive me out to-morrow to see the neighbourhood. I am very content and thankful with my lot. I had upon the whole a good night's rest—felt my mind much drawn out in love to those I left behind me at home, and fancied I could almost hear baby say, "ha—there!" I think of you a good deal, and should like to peep in upon you. I hope, my dear girl, that you are supported by heavenly consolations under your heavy trials—they are such as are but little capable of alleviation from earthly sources, but the hand of the Omnipotent can and will sustain the feeble spirit. I am often engaged in prayer for you, and trust it will not be in vain. . . .

I am very glad (Mr. Vasey writes on July 29th) to learn from your letter received this morning, that you are better. A statement which your handwriting in part confirms; may it be many years before your right hand forgets its cunning! I forgot to congratulate you on your sale of bazaar articles, you will be getting quite rich. I am thankful to say that I not only keep well, but improving every day. I have engaged as a thank-offering for your improvement, reported this morning, to have an outdoor service in the Bull-ring to-morrow afternoon, and have also promised to preach at

Clifton next Sunday in Mr. Punshon's place. This will just prevent me from rusting, and keep me in preaching trim. We have been considering the cases of candidates, and have had a sharp discussion—mainly between ——— and myself on the ground of literary qualifications for the ministry. ——— affirming with a grave and solemn air that a man who could not repeat the Apostles' creed—who could not name the sovereigns reigning in England for the last 100 years, and who could not name the day on which John Wesley was born, was utterly unfit for the ministry, whilst T. V. admitted that he could not have answered the question about John Wesley—challenged the platform to an examination in chronological dates, and with the concurrence and applause of nearly the whole Conference, denounced the attempt to hamper a great question with such irrelevant matters. I have received many thanks from all quarters for my speech.

July 31st. . . I had a very good day yesterday, enjoyed my preaching out-of-doors, had a very interesting congregation of roughs and idlers, who listened very attentively, and appeared much solemnised and impressed while I preached from "God requireth that which is past." My spirits were very much raised by the effort, and I felt abundantly rewarded in my own soul. I slept unusually well last night, and this morning felt much revived.

August 5th, 1865. . . The report of the special committee on chapel affairs was brought in, recommending by a majority, I think of two, the appointment of a second clerical secretary. On its adoption being moved, I moved, as an amendment, that the question be re-committed to a larger committee. I objected to the fact that my name was left off that committee, and denounced the practice of so dealing with men, who had applied themselves to the study of these questions, simply because their opinions happened to be disagreeable to the officials. I stated roundly that the Conference would some day express its disapprobation of such a course if it was persisted in, and there was a very hearty burst of cheering in response to that appeal. I then said what I had to say as to the chapel committee. Mr. ——— seconded my amendment, which, after a very obstinate debate, was carried by a majority of two to one—the majority including nearly two-thirds of the men on the platform. . . .

August 10th, 1865. . . . I was actually dancing for joy in my bedroom this morning at the idea of setting off home to-day, and had made up my mind to take the mail train at 10.19 to-night, by which I found I could get into Harrogate at six in the morning. We have had, however, so much miscellaneous business introduced to-day, that the stations have been thrown into the back-ground, and though we are sitting to-night, and shall probably stay till 10 o'clock, the stations will not be ready till to-morrow morning, and I cannot leave till I have got my stations for the preachers of the district. If possible I will leave to-morrow morning at half-past 11, due at half-past 5 p.m., but if I cannot catch that train, will come by the mail as above, travelling all night, which will be pleasant and safe. All is going on right, the rest of the news I will give you when I see you.

Part of the journey home was made in the company

of the late respected Rev. J. Morton, who thus spoke of it:—

"I have a very pleasant remembrance of returning by the night mail from the Birmingham Conference of 1865 with dear Mr. Vasey, and as we were the only occupants of a compartment, and under no restraint, our conversation was almost exclusively on Methodism, its position, work, and prospects. I was struck with his complete knowledge of, and deep interest in, the business of Conference, nothing seemed to have escaped his attention.

"We had a long talk about Methodism in Leeds, which he was deeply anxious should be improved and extended, so as to regain its former relative proportions among the masses in that large town.

"But what impressed me most deeply, was his great joy at the prosperity which had attended his labours in Harrogate, and the determination he expressed again and again on our way, to live and labour entirely and directly for the salvation of souls; and very often since, both before and especially after his death, have I thought with what singleness of purpose, and earnestness of spirit, he carried out this determination in Harrogate, Newcastle, and Sunderland, and what glorious results he was permitted to witness."

On Thursday, September 14th, Mr. Vasey hailed the arrival of his third daughter and last-born child. Though for the first year so frail as often to make it a struggle to maintain life, yet through the care of Divine Providence she lived to be with her little brother peculiarly the joy and delight of her father's heart, and indeed of the whole household.

In the last week of this month he conducted a series of special services, on which occasion his subjects were the following:—

Sunday services—"Seven Golden Candlesticks—Jesus in the midst."

Monday—"Necessity for distress on account of the rarity of conversions."

Tuesday—"The power vested in the Church by the promise of the Holy Ghost."

Wednesday—"Necessity for economising that power by well adapted Christian agency."

Thursday—"The value of the poor in relation to the Church, and importance of directing evangelistic efforts towards them."

Friday—"The interesting and hopeful field for labour presented by the young."

These services though not conducted with such marked outward results as some succeeding ones, were yet accompanied by Divine powers, and their good effects remain to this day.

In November Mr. Vasey went to Ireland to preach anniversary sermons, having arranged in connection with these to hold revival meetings. We transcribe a few extracts from his letters, and also reminiscences kindly penned by the Rev. John Dwyer, which refer to this visit and its results.

Enfield House, Belfast, December 13th, 1865. . . . I am very anxious and somewhat nervous about my experiment here, and if I could not fall back upon a sense of duty and the sincerity of my motives, should have but little comfort in the attempt. Yet I feel certain that by the blessing of God I shall do some good to a few people, which, if it be not apparent at the time, will bring forth permanent fruits. My great anxiety is about the attendance; their week night congregations are very miserable, and most of the people live at some distance from the chapel. I have been out this morning on a tour of exploration, and called at Dr. Cooke's, found him ill in bed, and only saw Miss C——. I had a very cordial reception from every one to whom I have been introduced, and find that the impression made at Belfast by visitors at Harrogate is both favourable and extensive. The present Mayor, who is not a Methodist, is amongst the number of those who heard me, and is expected at the chapel on Sunday. The Mayor elect, who enters upon his office on the 1st of January, is a Wesleyan. I also saw the chapel in Donegal Square this morning. It is a very chaste building, in the Greek-Doric style, and nearly as large as Harrogate Chapel, but not so long or so lofty in the interior. It is well situated, and very attractive in appearance. The services on the week night in this town are very late, and do not commence generally till eight o'clock; the Sunday services are 11 and 7. My host and hostess are very kind. . . . The town of Belfast is very flourishing, and you see everywhere the marks of prosperity; new rows of houses spring up faster than the streets can be

paved; tasteful and elegant shops and warehouses taking the place of mean, old-fashioned structures; a bustling, busy appearance in the streets, and nothing of the rags and mendicancy of an Irish town. The people are all well employed at good wages.

December 15th, 1865. . . . I am as comfortable as possible here, and am improving in health. Last night was not so good as the former, partly because I get too much excited in the evening services. . . .

The meeting last night was a very good one. I had given notice that I should attend in the library belonging to the chapel, for the purpose of conversing with any anxious inquirers, and I had one interesting case of a respectable young married man, who found peace whilst I was praying with him. This encouraged me at the commencement, but also excited my feelings to a degree that I could scarcely control during the public service. The attendance was much more numerous than the night before, though it was the night for service in all the neighbouring places of worship. They told me that we had all the respectable families of the congregation present, and the attention and interest of the people was intense. The feeling at times was so powerful, that the least encouragement would have developed it, but I thought it more prudent to restrain it, and to engage the people in silent prayer for the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Blessed Spirit was indeed present in power, and the ministers who prayed afterwards, "prayed in the Holy Ghost." I now feel certain that good will be done, but shall endeavour to-night, by the help of God, to bring matters to an issue.

Many persons from other denominations were present last night, and the Mayor elect, with whom I am to dine to-morrow. . . . I have had dear Sissy much on my mind for the last few days, but the time is short, and we shall soon meet again. . . .

After his return home Mr. Vasey received from the Superintendent of the Belfast Circuit the annexed letter:—

Belfast, 21st December, 1865.

DEAR MR. VASEY,

I hope you got across the Channel on Monday night smoothly, completed your journey expeditiously, and reached home safely.

You had not well left us when a change of weather took place, but I am glad that it kept up so well while you were here.

It is not customary here to pass formal votes of thanks to kind friends who may from time to time visit us, but I would scarcely be doing right were I to omit to let you know the unanimous feeling of satisfaction and gratitude expressed on all hands, and more particularly at our Leaders' Meeting on Monday evening,

There is no doubt that your labours amongst us have done good, and I have no doubt we shall yet more largely reap the benefit of them in weeks and months to come.

I know I do not ask more than you will freely concede, when I solicit an interest in your prayers on our behalf, and on behalf of this country generally.

Hoping that I may have many opportunities in time to come of meeting you in our Emerald Isle,

I am, gratefully and affectionately yours,

JOHN DWYER.

Of this Irish visit Mr. Dwyer has penned the following notes:—

"In 1865 I was stationed at Donegal Square, Belfast, and Mr. Vasey paid us a visit extending about a week. His appointment then was Harrogate, where some friends from Ireland had attended his ministry with much advantage. As we were accustomed at times to invite a minister from England to preach our anniversary sermons, it was proposed that we should obtain the services of Mr. Vasey.

His reply to our application was remarkably characteristic. He expressed his willingness to come, but said that no two sermons that he could give would be worth coming so far to deliver, and that he would like to have a series of weeknight meetings combined with the Sabbath services. We gladly accepted his offer, and made arrangements accordingly. The expectations of our friends took a different shape; the pecuniary interests of the Church of God were not lost sight of, but they were subordinated to interests very much more important. Nor were we disappointed. He threw himself into the meetings with great energy, and many found them to be exceedingly profitable. The results in immediate cases of awakening and conversion were not so large as we desired, but a quickening influence was received by many; which led to more entire consecration and greater usefulness. Mr. Vasey's influence in social intercourse made a very pleasing impression. It was the reverse of dull, and yet was very profitable. He was ever ready to converse freely on any useful subject. He manifested acquaintance with an extensive range of topics, and gave his views on those which were discussed in a bold and earnest style, giving now and again very practical hints and useful advice. He strongly enforced the view that Christian men should never be satisfied with mediocrity,

but should aim at excellence in everything they undertook."

The Christmas was as usual a very happy one in Mr. Vasey's home, and the second month of the year brought to him a great accession of happiness through the news conveyed to him of the conversion of another of his sons. The joy of his heart was expressed as follows :—

Harrogate, Feb. 7th, 1866. . . . I have not for a long time heard anything that has given me so much pleasure as the intelligence conveyed in your letter received this morning. I received it with a gush of gratitude to Almighty God, who has in this answered my many prayers on your behalf, and all through the day I have felt relieved of an anxiety that has long oppressed me.

I have for some time past noticed the marks of a work of grace in you, and have seen with satisfaction an increase in your conscientiousness and self-control, but have felt uneasy at your not apparently enjoying the sense of God's love in your soul. I knew that nothing would be so sure a protection to your principles as the clear sense of pardon. The joy of the Lord is always the strength of the Christian ; and now that you have got this, I have no fear for you. You are entitled to all the blessings and privileges of the children of God—including access to God—power over sin, and hope of heaven. I hope you will lay claim to them in the exercise of faith and prayer.

You will find the blessings to which justification introduces us clearly set forth in Romans v. 1—11, and they are all open to the key of faith.

Mamma was delighted with your letter, and will, I daresay, write to you herself. Take Hebrews xii. 1—3 for your direction, and above all do not forget looking unto Jesus, that will at all times brighten up your evidence and revive your drooping spirits.

I have not time to add more, but my prayers for you will now be mingled with thanksgivings for the grace that God has shown you, which I shall endeavour to use as an encouragement to myself to greater ministerial faithfulness and zeal.

May God bless and keep you !

In reference to Mr. Vasey's solicitude about the spiritual interests of mercantile men, a lady kindly writes :—

" I valued Mr. Vasey not only for his kindness to my dear husband and family ; he was ever ready to console in trouble, to advise in perplexity, to soothe and comfort in affliction. To my husband he often gave a suggestive word, and when opportunity offered, advice and counsel, which if acted upon could not but ensure the best results. He was a favourite with my husband, who sat

under his ministry with great delight, and though not immediately brought into connexion with God's people on earth, I doubt not while listening to his powerful appeals from the pulpit, he was taught those useful lessons which like good seed germinate and bring forth fruit in due time to the honour and glory of the great head of the Church, for whom Mr. Vasey so zealously laboured.

"I well remember having a conversation with him on the subject of my husband's conversion. In reply he said, the power of God is unlimited, I pray for him daily along with others specially, and we must leave the result in the hands of God, He will answer in His own time.

"In the pulpit or out of it his one great business was to serve his Master. One Sunday evening the sermon he gave us had been, I have no doubt, specially prepared for those who were going daily to Leeds and Bradford; and as if this was to be the last appeal, and he was determined to clear himself of their blood, he told them that God would not always be merciful if they did not accept His gracious overtures. He stood there as God's ambassador, beseeching them to be reconciled to God through Christ; and working himself up to a pitch I shall never forget, reminded them that they would all have to stand at the bar of God; their minister would also be there, and not one in the congregation could say that he, as the servant of the Most High, had not offered salvation to them without money and without price. How he struggled while the tears gushed forth, and he repeatedly raised his hand to his face and threw them aside; as though the time was too short and the moments too few for him to declare all that he had in his heart to tell them. He reminded them of the dangers to which they were constantly exposed, and said he was afraid to look over the pages of the daily papers lest he should come upon the appalling news that some accident had happened, and thereby many or all of them had been suddenly ushered out of time into eternity unprepared. How solemn the admonitions, and how solemn the silence while he delivered this impressive sermon!"

The subjoined letter was written by Mr. Vasey to the gentleman to whom allusion is made in the preceding lines:—

Harrogate, March 16th, 1866.

. . . . You will be surprised to receive a letter from me at this time, but I hope that perhaps you may have more leisure and inclination to read it where you are than you might have at home.

I need not tell you that I have been ever since I came to Harrogate very anxious for your conversion. You will have inferred that from the many appeals I have made to you on the subject both in public and in private.

But now that my residence in Harrogate is drawing near to its close, I begin to feel more anxious on this subject, and should like to see you before I go, sitting at the feet of Jesus and joined to His Church.

I cannot but think that you have got some good to your soul which if improved, may lead to your salvation. Your attendance on the public worship of God has been most exemplary, and I have often been pleased to notice your deep and interested attention to the Word of God. God surely must have visited you with softenings of heart and kindly drawings of His Spirit in connection with the ministry of His Word.

Your personal kindness has been an encouraging indication that the faithfulness and pointed character of the appeals which I have addressed to you have not offended you. For this I thank you, and I thank God, who I am persuaded has given you this grace.

Will you allow me then to urge upon you the importance of personal decision and consecration.

Who can tell the advantages that might result to yourself, to your family, and to the cause of God in Harrogate if you were wholly devoted to God, filled with His love, and engaged in His service?

Let me intreat you to yield to the mercies of God and especially to the dying love of Jesus, and give your heart wholly up to Him. Do it without delay—go to God on your knees in private, and offer Him your whole heart, and cry for mercy, and you will not be cast out.

I wish you had just a taste of the happiness which real religion begets in the soul. You will then only have to regret that you had not sooner embrace it.

My prayers follow this letter as they have for a long time past followed you, and I hope your case will be only another of those answers to prayer, for which I shall have to give thanks to God for ever.

Believe me,
Yours faithfully and affectionately,
THOMAS VASEY.

In prospect of the inevitable change of sphere, Mr. Vasey had received overtures from several of the leading circuits in the Connexion; in some instances

from old scenes of labour; and he had accepted an invitation to Brighton, subject to the carrying out of proposed new arrangements which promised him wider scope for aggressive action in the service of the great King.

The Conference being held this year in Leeds he was enabled to spend several of his nights at home, so that the usual every day correspondence by letter was unnecessary. The election of his friend, the Rev. William Arthur to the Presidential Chair afforded him great pleasure; and his own introduction to the Legal Hundred was a source of gratification to him. He wrote as follows to his sister in reference to this honour, and also to his next year's appointment, about which there was more uncertainty than had been usually the case in his removals.

Leeds, 1866. . . . It is only this morning while the ordination is going on, that I can find either time or strength to write a few lines to you. I have been here for more than a fortnight with the exception of Sundays, working hard for more than twelve hours a-day, and taxed to the utmost of my energies, which are now not by any means so strong as they were, and I am at times thoroughly done up, but must try to hold on through another week if possible.

I am cheered by the blessing of God and by the kindly feelings of my brethren, which are manifested in the most gratifying manner on all occasions.

It was a very unexpected honour to be elected into the legal hundred by so large a majority as one hundred and eleven over my nearest competitor, especially as the competing names were so honourable; and the congratulations I received on all hands have been very gratifying to me. I feel, however, these things to be very little in comparison of the main scope of my life, which, as I apprehend it may not be long, I am determined to devote to the great work of saving souls. I am thankful that no personal or private interests of a selfish kind interfere with this.

I am removed from Brighton, but whether I shall be fixed in London, Manchester, Liverpool, or Bradford is at present uncertain, and I shall not attempt in any way to influence it; as the future course of my two eldest boys will as far as I can see be determined by the appointments of this year. . . .

After much uncertainty, prolonged discussion, and sharp contest, during which Mr. Vasey maintained silence, he was by the vote of Conference appropriated to Newcastle-on-Tyne, and was elected chairman of that district.

At this session, Mr. Vasey made a speech against the use of Degrees won too cheaply. In allusion to this, and his influence in Conference, a brother minister writes:—

"We have lost a hero. We all felt that when Thomas Vasey passed from us, there was no one who could fill the place he had left vacant. It is still empty! His hatred of cant—his life of sanctity without sanctimoniousness—was a perpetual sermon to his brethren. Oh, how he did hate meanness, and all that looked like veneer! I shall always look back with pleasure upon the outspoken attack he once made upon those of his fellows who had degraded us by wearing the German-silver Degrees—the cheap M.A. and D.D. He loved learning, but he hated borrowed tinsel."

At the close of Conference, Mr. Vasey set about making arrangements for leaving his circuit, sparing a few days for a visit to Redcar and the neighbourhood, in which he combined ministerial effort with physical refreshment. On his return he penned a letter to a young lady, dying of consumption, whom he had met at Redcar. This we subjoin:—

Harrogate, August 21st, 1866.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I have thought much about you since I left Redcar, and regret much that I had not the opportunity of some conversation with you.

You seem to be placed in a very trying and painful position in respect to your health, and I daresay will often be the subject of melancholy and desponding feelings. I wonder whether you have the consolations of God, the peace of Christ, and the perfect work of patience wrought in your soul. These are the questions I should have liked to have asked you when at Redcar, and I still feel anxious to know how you stand in these respects, and, if you have no objections, should like to have a little correspondence with you on the subject.

It must be the design of God to bring you nearer to Himself by this affliction, and I am sure that it may be made the means of great blessing to you.

I have in the case of one near to me at home such an instance of the power of religion to sanctify suffering, and to give real happiness in the midst of it that I should not hesitate in any case to recommend the grace of God as all-sufficient. Perhaps you have experienced this yourself, and if so, your case would be an additional confirmation of the promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." If not, I should be very glad to

endeavour to point you to the true source of strength and comfort, and encourage you to seek it.

Believe me,
Yours faithfully,
THOMAS VASEY.

When the time was at hand for Mr. Vasey to remove to his new Circuit, he was kindly assisted at Harrogate, as elsewhere, in making preparations for the journey, which was now, owing to Mrs. Vasey's continued delicate state of health, as on two previous similar occasions, a matter of anxious concern to him.

The kindness constantly displayed by the Harrogate people towards himself and family, and the happiness they had experienced whilst sojourning amongst them, made the prospect of parting a cause of regret. In bidding adieu to their pastor, several of his friends expressed in a handsome and substantial form their affectionate regard, and at the appointed period, they separated with mutual good wishes, blessings and prayers.

The added impressions and recollections by three separate pens will serve more fully to illustrate Mr. Vasey's labours in the Harrogate Circuit, and will appropriately close this chapter.

A young friend writes :—

"The name of the Rev. Thomas Vasey to the friends at Harrogate, 'is as an ointment poured forth.' The sun portrays his own sublimity, and a lofty character radiates everywhere its own dignity. Thus was it with Mr. Vasey; the elder people reverenced and loved him, and the younger loved and reverenced him. The strength of his fine individuality was girdled by absolute self-abnegation, and as the waves greet smilingly the rays of the sun, as his golden fingers conquer their wilfulness, so were the young people of Harrogate conquered by the force of power, truth, transparency, and dignity, which they beheld from first to last, in the character of their beloved pastor. In part, we knew him at once, but it was in the ministrations of the sanctuary where the smile of Jehovah's approval pre-eminently shone on the

'Israelite indeed,' that the splendour of his character more fully shone forth, and his presence with us was felt to be 'a savour of life unto life.'

"Early in September he preached a sermon to the young from, 'My son give me thine heart.' Its construction was so clear, that it was as if we walked from room to room, beholding in each, pictures of living beauty, graced with the radiance of unsullied light. Many went home that night to weep and pray, and some we know, on whose minds conviction of sin rested so distressingly, that they refused intercourse with friends and needful refreshment, until they had cast their souls on the depth of love of which they had heard.

"We think it impossible for any minister to surpass Mr. Vasey in his clear perception of the mind of God in His written Word—of His footsteps in Providence—of His revelation in nature—and of the intimate issue of present discipline in its relation to the world to come. Many from distant parts, high in position and influential in intellectual, moral, and spiritual rank, delighted in the feast prepared for them in the Wesleyan Chapel at Harrogate. A gentleman of title remarked, 'I have never heard anything to equal, and shall never hear anything to surpass, Mr. Vasey's sermons.'

"Mr. Vasey's own heart and mind were in such perfect harmony with the will of God, that the treasures from the 'inexhaustible riches' were handed out by him with the grace of the 'master of ceremonies.' His only aim was the salvation of sinners. Never was the Atonement more preciously and endearingly advocated than when, 'baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire,' he preached 'Jesus, and Him crucified.' People trembled and groaned beneath the Word, and an audible 'Amen' often came from those whose souls were absorbed in feelings of adoration as the hymns were being sung.

"A friend, who constantly attended Mr. Vasey's ministry, recently remarked—'His sermons were surpassingly beautiful, but his grace of supplication can never be expressed in words.' Lethargic Christians were quickened

as the gracious anointing came upon them; and the divine unction touched the dead in sin with vivid impressions of their danger. Now was inaugurated that revival of pure religion and Pentecostal outpouring for which the church had been waiting for the preceding three years. Often after the conclusion of the services, the stewards, following their friend and minister into the vestry, found him prostrate and physically exhausted. To their sympathising inquiries his cheerful response was—'It's glorious work! it's glorious work!'"

"It was the custom of Mr. Vasey in the prayer-meetings, which he usually held at the close of the evening sermon (if there were any signs of good being done), to invite any who were anxiously enquiring their way to God to converse with him in the vestry, or to call upon him the following morning at his own house. A gentleman burdened with doubts and stricken in conscience, accepted the kind invitation. The call was made on Monday morning, he told Mr. Vasey his state, and his reasoning mind found one able to grapple with its difficulties. The labyrinth was intricate, but the patience never exhausted. As another pioneered the way to the Cross with tenderness so Christ-like, and spiritual perception so clear he found the mists departing, and there they both kneeled and prayed until the witness of his acceptance in the beloved came, and he rose a new creature in Christ Jesus.

"Doubtless many were the incidents analogous to this. One day, three poor men went for a spiritual lift, as they called it, and when they had got it, Mr. Vasey tenderly placed his hand on their shoulder, saying, 'My brothers, pray for me; I cannot do without your prayers.'

"A home in Harrogate has recently been clouded by sudden severe affliction. A loving mother with only a few moments' warning was brought into many hours of total unconsciousness, and comforting were the words which she had spoken only a few hours previously in reference to her perfect repose in Christ. She said, 'I was in the deepest spiritual perplexity and almost hopeless when

Mr. Vasey talked and reasoned with me until the light came, and since then I have not had a doubt in regard to my eternal safety.' She still lives, and lives to Jesus.

"Already the Church was formed by breezes from the 'Holy Hill.' The exhortation to believers was that all sin must be abandoned in order to the manifest outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He implored the people to live much in their closets, and to try to maintain that calm and rest in Christ which, if experienced, would reveal itself everywhere in contact with the outer world. The members of his own class were greatly urged to 'love God with all their heart and mind and soul and strength.' And after carefully explaining the difference between heart, mind and soul, he said, 'This is perfect love; try to understand it; try to live it. God requires this of us, and He wants us to enjoy it.'

"The Church felt that they must be in earnest. Tracts were given to distributors which were to be introductory to spiritual converse with the poor. Visits were specially paid to those whose occupations precluded them from attending many of the services. One such remarked, 'It always raised me higher when Mr Vasey called on us and prayed that we might be kept from worldliness.'

"Every effort was made to improve the organisation of the Sabbath-school. A Catechumen class was formed of elder scholars, which was to instruct inquirers, preparatory to their entering the society class. Thus far it has proved a success; there are now more than thirty names in the class book.

We needed not to wait for revival meetings. The quickening spirit was felt at every service, and when the local preachers and leaders, who had caught something of their pastor's zeal and spirit, united with him in holding special services, the tokens of God's smile rested continually on all. The band-room, with the room adjacent, was crowded night by night, and many were saved. Four out of one family, who had lived forty years and upwards, without pardon, came and were saved by grace. One said, while Mr. Vasey was preaching

the word came with power. I thought some one had told him my case.

"Another was first convinced of sin in asking Mr. Vasey for a ticket of admittance to the love-feast. She said—'He looked into my face with such a beautiful smile, and said he had noticed me in the chapel, and thought I was not saved, and he trusted I should not rest till I had found peace through faith in Christ.' The following Sabbath he preached from the text, "There shall be no night there;" and out of her darkness she found her way to Him 'who maketh the blind to see.'

"Mr. Vasey's visits to the sick were greatly blest. A gentleman who had come to Harrogate in quest of health (but whose eyes were closed in death in the house of his sojourn), implored the prayers of this man of God. This gentleman had accumulated perishable wealth, but had left his soul to starve. Mr. Vasey prayed, and read, and pleaded with him, until, one day, mercy's rays shone on his death-bed, and he could say—'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. My sins, which were many, are all forgiven me.'

"A lady who had lived a gay life was suddenly called to die, and, despairingly, she begged that some one would pray for her. Our beloved pastor was sent for, and he prayed, and instructed, and reasoned: but all was dark, she seemed past the door of hope. At length, it occurred to him to inquire if she could forgive her foes. She seemed startled, and then confessed that she had lived for many years at enmity with her own brother. The 'faith which works by love and purifies the heart' was given to her, and, as she grasped the anchor, she passed into eternity, 'saved so as by fire.'

"A woman who had spent her life in hard toil, but who had not spared one hour in solemn dedication of her soul to God, trembled beneath the agonising distress of a mis-spent life. She had just cooked a five o'clock dinner when the summons came, and she was taken from her kitchen of toil to her room of death. Mr. Vasey found she had been under conviction of sin for some

time. He spoke calm and gentle words of mercy to her, and, after presenting her case importunately to the Throne of Grace, and pleading the merits of Christ, he went home to pray. Shortly afterwards a kind messenger conveyed to him the news of her salvation.

"Meanwhile, the adversary of souls was sowing tares where an inch of unwatered ground existed. But the living ministry of the Rev. Thomas Vasey allotted the foe no space, and, in the light of the higher life in which the church was then living, his deeds soon became manifest. A case where two families became at enmity brought out the transparency of our pastor's character most vividly. He despised everything little, and his presence seemed to crush any attempt at scorn. He was a hero in nobility of mind, and could adventure unfalteringly as 'peace-maker' where one less noble would shrink. Where he stepped in to make reconciliation, fumes of unkind feeling were displaced by the 'charity which thinketh no evil.' And happily met two circles to spend a social evening with their pastor, after he had chased away, by his holy admonitions and loving counsels, every note of discord.

"Fragrant as is the name of the Rev. Thomas Vasey to the elder people, it is equally so to the young. To the former he was a brother, an adviser, and a true pastor. To the latter he was a pastor, a father, a model. By his strength of character many were made strong. He allured to everything exalting to the mind; and they loved him and longed to imitate him. One day he was invited to meet a number of young friends to tea. After the repast he read the Scriptures and prayed, leaving such an impression on the minds of some young gentlemen of another denomination who were present, that they said they could never forget its elevating influence. After prayer, he listened with great delight to some sweet Scotch and Italian airs, until the hour of seven called him to other service.

"Mr. Vasey was particularly anxious to encourage his young friends in working out their individual life plan,

and many owe much of their success to his cheerful participation in their schemes. Two young merchants, now in rising positions in distant parts, who delighted to attend his Bible-class, will ever cherish sacredly his memory. It was the custom of our pastor at the Bible-class to elicit the thoughts of others, whilst giving his own. This was doubtless done to train younger minds into habitual original thought, which he held to be so essential in times when religious sentiment is so freely spoken, but so little understood."

Another friend says, "I had the happy privilege of being one of Mr. Vasey's flock in Harrogate, and I revere his memory and thank God that ever I was permitted to be under his ministry and guidance. As a preacher, he was quite original, speaking much to man's intellect by plain, strenuous reasoning, and then appealing to the heart. His language was easy to be understood by the most ignorant, he being careful to use as few as possible of what he termed 'sixpenny words.' He felt what he preached, again and again did the tears trickle down his face (which were as quickly dashed away), and every word came as from a heart full of anguish, yearning over unconverted souls.

"In the prayer-meeting he prevented any inconsistency arising from enthusiasm, and would have us sing with energy; he liked not drawling, and would often say, 'sing a little faster;' then, suiting the action to the word, would sing with his whole heart unto the Lord.

"When he approached the Divine Being, as a rule, he included himself amongst the worst of sinners, invariably using the word *we* and not *them*, making us all feel the one common brotherhood, existing amongst us.

"During divine service, he expressly wished us to have the attitude of prayer, whilst approaching the mercy-seat, and desired us all to repeat the Lord's prayer after him, that thus we might feel a full interest in his pleadings with the Almighty.

"I may mention an incident, which illustrates the effectiveness of Mr. Vasey's preaching. John Carrol, a

Roman Catholic, lived in a small house in a little back court of one of the streets of Harrogate. In the course of my tract distribution on Christmas day, I invited him to the house of God. The following Saturday being the last day of the year, he resolved upon going to the watchnight service, but Satan, ever on the alert, allured him to the public-house. After taking a little beer, it occurred to him that he would go to the Wesleyan Chapel.

"During Mr. Vasey's last prayer, at the close of a very impressive sermon, when the new year had just commenced, we were suddenly interrupted by a loud voice, exclaiming, 'Most reverend sir, I haven't been in a place of worship for eighteen years, but I feel your speech has done me good.' After concluding the prayer, Mr. Vasey invited the man into the vestry; and in addressing him, Mr. Vasey said, 'What is your name?' The reply was, 'No matter what my name is, I want salvation; but my name is Jack Carrol.' 'I think,' said Mr. Vasey, 'you have had a drop of beer;' then the man told him how he had resolved—where he had been—and how the thought struck him that he must go to chapel. Mr. Vasey, after a little more conversation, said he would be glad to see him at his house. The next morning he ran to the chapel—just as Bunyan depicted the pilgrim fleeing from the wrath to come—in all his dirt and rags he ran, seeming to fear lest anything should turn him back.

"The man continued to attend every service, manifesting a remarkable change, both as to the outward as well as the inner man; his family often accompanied him, thus we saw much of him until his occupation removed him to another sphere, from whence he wrote to Mr. Vasey a letter of gratitude. I heard, several years afterwards, that the man died a happy death, triumphing amidst the many Catholics that surrounded his dying bed.

"The following is a copy of a critique in a well written hand, left in one of the pews of the Harrogate

Chapel. 'Minister, Rev. T. Vasey; a talented, original and pious minister; often fluent, and sometimes eloquent, without any attempt or effort to be either; *the best reader I ever heard.*'

"As a man of principle, he was stern with the hypocrite, and never hesitated to use a word of reproof when necessary. When consulted with reference to raffling at the Bazaar, held when he was stationed at Harrogate, he firmly denounced the practice, and with authority forbid any such dealings in connection with the cause of God."

A local preacher has kindly supplemented the following reminiscences:—

"Mr. Vasey lives in my heart and affections as strongly to-day as when I listened to his sweet voice and had fellowship with him. And in reference to many whom I could mention, as well as myself, it may be said of him, 'being dead, he yet speaketh,' and I think that his influence will still live for many years to come.

"Numbers who passed away centuries ago have left behind them an influence which will last as long as the world itself. Luther is not dead; he still lives in the heart of every Protestant. Knox is not dead, all Scotland speaks of his presence. Raikes is not dead, he lives in every Sunday-school in the wide world. Wilberforce is not dead; he lives amid the freed men of every land and race. Latimer was right when he said, 'Brother Ridley, we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace in England, as shall never be put out.' I have referred to the above brilliant characters, not that I think Mr. Vasey's influence will be felt as widely as was theirs, but I do think there was not a work accomplished by any of them but with which the great mind of Mr. Vasey could have grappled, or to which his noble Christian heart might have led him had he been the hero of their time.

"As an individual I shall bless God as long as I live for Mr. Vasey. I was converted to God under the ministry of the Rev. H. Pollinger, a gentleman who will always have a place in my heart, but I doubt whether

my stability and Christian fortitude would have been so valid had I not had the ministry, and consequent private intercourse of Mr. Vasey. Previous to his coming to this Circuit I had been appointed class-leader of the members now connected with the Bar Chapel (the chapel at that time not being built); I had only two or three in my class, in consequence of which I was very often discouraaged, and many times thought of giving it up; but lest one soul through my negligence should be lost I was kept plodding on. We then commenced open air services, but the weather becoming cold and unfit for preaching, the Lord touched the heart of a poor widow, who opened her house for us. This was the commencement of Mr. Vasey's ministry in the place. I shall never forget his first sermon. The cottage was crowded within, and many were without. He preached with, I think, unusual liberty, while his large heart was throbbing with love for souls and his eyes swimming with tears. It seemed as though a Divine afflatus moved him—wrapped him in an ecstacy, and as it was with the prophets in olden time, 'his lips were touched as if with live coals from off the altar.' To resist was to resist the voice of God. That was the beginning of better days. A glorious revival broke out, and while we listened to the deep unutterable groans of these smitten of God, we also heard the shout of rejoicing; strong men were in tears, clinging to each other's necks; and the newly born exhorting his struggling brother, reminding him that religion was a reality. 'I have got it,' said he; 'I have got it. Glory, glory!' That winter my class increased to forty. We had often prayed that God would fill the house and convert the people. Long had we seen the need of a revival. The drought was scorching and withering our spiritual life; but now a second Elijah had come and with his all-powerful faith and prayer was bringing down showers of blessings upon the moral wilderness, small at first, but increasing in power and effect until, as I have said, a class of two had swollen to forty. Until in that so-

called Sodom, the scorner's seat was almost empty. Gambling received a terrible blow; packs of cards were torn to shreads and committed to the flames. To live in those days with such a man as Mr. Vasey was like going back to the days of Wesley, Whitfield, Nelson, and a host of others who lived when Methodism was truly a living mighty power. I remember him preaching in a barn belonging to Mr. Thomas, a farmer in that neighbourhood. We wondered where the people were to come from if the place was to be filled; but no sooner had the announcement been made, and the time for service come, than they began to pour in from every point of the compass, and the place was soon crowded to excess. His liberty of speech on that occasion was remarkably great; he laid hold of grand Bible truths and wielded them with such force and power that we almost felt while listening to him that we were dealing with God rather than man; his sympathetic appeals to the heart, and his vehement expostulations with sinners were so combined, that the lion of sin cowed before him, and stout-hearted rebels trembled.

"Mr. Vasey was a true soldier of the Cross. I never knew him lag behind in any good work. Like the Wesleys and Whitfield to preach the Gospel under the broad canopy of heaven, seemed to be his great delight. I remember his coming to meet a number of us coming from the Bar to the Harrogate Chapel, and never I think did I love him more than then. I almost fancy I can still see him. He led the van, somewhat portly in person. Look at him! His little band of men behind in marching order; with stick in hand and somewhat stately step, head thrown back, and his sweet voice borne up to Heaven in that delightful Christian song:—

> 'My God I am thine. What a comfort divine.
> What a blessing to know, that my Jesus is mine!'

And then, with a significant shake of his head and motion of his hand, which seemed to say, sing it with all your heart.

'Hallelujah, send the glory. Hallelujah, amen.
Hallelujah send the glory, to revive us again.'

"Mr. Vasey was not easily staggered by difficulties; for him to think, was to do. I remember him saying, 'James, we have got a nice society here (referring to the Bar-end); we must now have a place for them to worship in.' This could not be easily done. There was only one plot of ground that could be bought; however, with perseverance and a little extra effort, the land was secured, and a new chapel seemed certain. The laying of the foundation stone with all its connecting circumstances will live in my recollection as long as memory holds her seat. It was the beginning of a new era in the village. Never, I think, was there a day of greater rejoicing. Not only was the ground on which the chapel was to be built crowded, but for a considerable distance the road was thronged with interested spectators. Never shall I forget the holy triumph which beamed through Mr. Vasey's eyes. It was indeed a conquest. Nor can I ever forget the speech he delivered while laying the stone. His words were clothed with power. Looking at the people it seemed as though after years of ignorance a thirst for knowledge had been awakened, and an apathy which had been hereditary, given place to new mental life, quickly succeeded by spiritual. That chapel has been the birthplace of scores of souls; some have joined hand in hand with their Pastor in glory, while others are still rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

"Mr. Vasey's success can only be traced to one source —he was led, I believe, in the strictest sense of the word, by the Spirit of God. He was willing to be anything or do anything for the sake of his Master. In preaching he preached for the glory of God, and God could answer faithful prayer on his behalf. Often I have asked, 'Lord, loose him, let him go—give him liberty;' and I think, in every instance, while the minister was struggling for what I was asking, I have seen the tears rush into his eyes, his heart seeming to be filled to the

brim and throwing up his arms, he has preached out of a full heart the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.

"Mr. Vasey's kindness and consideration for his weaker brethren I have never seen surpassed. I remember on one occasion having to preach at Harlow Hill. Mr. Vasey came to renew the members' tickets, bringing a friend with him. They arrived when I was just beginning to speak, and when his friend would have entered, he said, 'No, no, we must not go in, it would interrupt him,' and there in the cold he stood listening to my humble discourse; which I had no sooner finished than he entered, and with heart and soul joined in prayer and praise. I shall never forget the advice he gave me. He said, 'Always keep your powder dry and your armour bright. If you mean to be a soldier for Jesus Christ, you must not expect to go to bed every night with your skin whole.' 'Go on,' he said, 'be a man, do the devil all the harm you can; and,' said he, 'When I get to heaven, if ever I want to come back it will be just to give the devil another blow.'

"I have proved Mr. Vasey to be not only a minister, but a father, and as such his reproofs were administered with the greatest kindness and judgment. He always seemed to be afraid lest in giving reproof he should make a wrong impression, but there was such a tone of kindness in all that he said that his meaning could not be misunderstood.

> 'Such sharpness shows the sweetest friend,
> Such cuttings rather heal than rend,
> And such beginnings touch their end.'

"His advice in worldly matters was simply invaluable.

"Mr. Vasey has gone, but he still lives—lives in our hearts and affections. He has reached the harbour; but the warning and advice and exhortations he left behind will be the means of piloting many a tempest tossed mariner to the 'desired haven.' 'Heaven is the good man's home,'—he has reached that home. I would not call him back. He cannot come to me; but I

can go to him. And often I think, if permitted, he will look down upon us in our little chapel at 'the Bar' and as of old he would cheer us onward, and point us to the great reward. 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours and their works do follow them.'"

CHAPTER XII.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

Mr. Vasey, owing to comparative ignorance of the place and people, went to Newcastle with the feeling of cheerful acquiescence in the arrangements of Conference, as the prevailing one in his mind. But the very cordial reception he met with, and the hearty promises of support and co-operation he received from his ministerial colleagues,* and parishioners of all classes, soon gave him great assurance of a happy and above all useful time with them. Mr. Vasey always acted on the idea that a minister was comparatively powerless, unless the society was alive and thoroughly in sympathy with the avowed aims and desires of a pastor devoted to his work. The congregations of the principal chapels at least in the Newcastle Circuit were best, and indeed only completely satisfied with a man in the pulpit who was evidently in earnest in what he said, and said something that was worth listening to, and gave them new matter for thought. They had heard of Mr. Vasey in a way that led them to feel assured that they would find in him what they wanted, and so were ready in promising their help in carrying out his plans. And as he did not come below their expectations, so they certainly did not fail in their promises.

He writes to a member at Harrogate within a fortnight of arriving at Newcastle :—

I shall not soon forget the encouragement I derived from your Christian zeal, fidelity, and prayers, and trust that you will still

* Revs. S. Wilkinson, William Tyson, and James Kendall.

[illegible]

Vasey brought rare gifts to the duties of his official position. The union of wisdom, fidelity, and tenderness, made him an efficient and acceptable chairman. During his term of office he had two or three difficult cases of discipline with which to grapple; but these were conducted in a most admirable manner. The discrimination, fidelity, and loving solicitude displayed in the course of the thorough investigation to which the cases were subjected, can only be duly appreciated by those who were present on the occasion. It was a rare treat to hear Mr. Vasey conduct the theological examination of probationers, or candidates for the ministry. I remember one instance which was deeply affecting. The subject of examination was the eternal torments of hell. After the young man had cited appropriate passages of Scripture to prove the point, Mr. Vasey said it was appalling to think of an intelligent creature being doomed to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, and then burst into tears, and concluded by saying, that the doctrine must be firmly held, and compassionately preached, with the utmost tenderness of spirit."

The revival here referred to proved continuous through the three years of Mr. Vasey's stay in Newcastle, as is shown by the number of members in the district; which was, when he went, 11,191, and at the end of the first, second, and third years, 12,294, and 13,464, and 14,178, respectively.

His devoted zeal was felt in every department of labour, from more public and official duties to the quiet, though valuable work of the weekly prayer-meeting and class-meeting. The prayer-meeting he considered a regular and permanent engagement, that he never missed if he could help it; and he was not prevented from continuing the minister's class, though held at the awkward time of Saturday night. The members of his class felt themselves privileged in their leader. His advice was penetrating, and incited them to high attainments, whilst he shewed the steps and degrees clearly, and was frequent in urging the power of the Holy Ghost indwelling as a

cure for all shortcomings. His phraseology was never hackneyed, and his illustrations were striking and often original; as when he compared the conformity of a soul to the will of God, to the smooth motion of a railway train, which was only changed to disturbance and distraction when it left the line of rails. When to these characteristics was added the power of his prayers, the influence he exerted, resulted, in the case of most of his members, in a feeling of enthusiasm, which led to increased devotion of heart and effort in life. His account of himself was very modest, and seemed, to those who knew him intimately, to do him far less than justice. It did not refer to the deeper workings of his heart, but he *tacitly* gave it for granted that he had left first principles far behind, and was treading the higher walks of the Christian life.

His biographer is thankful for occasions of absence by which Mr. Vasey was led to correspond with members of his family; and this the more because, in the pressure of outside duties, his own family was sometimes in danger of being overlooked, and of missing the influence of regular and frequent personal contact with him. The letters he wrote speak for themselves. The first of these were written to his daughter at school, on receiving the news of her conversion:—

Newcastle-on-Tyne, February 20th, 1867. . . I was much pleased with the first letter addressed to me from Southport, and must apologise for not having acknowledged it sooner.

But your letter received this morning has caused me greatly to rejoice and give thanks to God. It is indeed the best news I have heard for a long time. I was in hopes that your going to school would be made the occasion of religious decision to you, and yet was in fear that the decision might be on the other side. I am glad, however, that after so long a struggle, in which the success has alternated between good and evil, the good spirit has at last triumphed over the evil one, and your heart is fully given to God.

I am much pleased with the clearness of the account you give of the change that has taken place in your soul, and am satisfied that it is a case of genuine conversion which I hope will prove as permanent as it is real. You will need to be often taking the same believing view of Jesus, and indeed, looking to Jesus must be the prevailing habit of your soul. You will get fresh pardon and strength as often as you "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

My prayers and praises will be mingled in your behalf at the throne of grace. . . .

To the same he writes :—

April 5th, 1867. . . . I am glad to hear that you hold fast your confidence; you will gather strength by conflict and may ever learn wisdom from your very failures, since by them you find out your weak points, and know where to be specially on your guard.

Watching and praying are great means of spiritual improvement; they work together very well and must never be separated. You will gather wisdom by your daily experience if you practise daily self-examination, so as to find out where you have failed and where you have succeeded.

But in order to profit by this, you should trace every effect to its cause, so that you may see the connection between the state of your mind and the acts of your life. Always, however, remember that God looks upon you with the eye of a tender and loving father, and is ready to pity, pardon, and help you. If you forget this, Satan will get an advantage over you, and make you miserable in proportion as you are conscientious. And remember, also, that the atonement of Jesus avails for you continually, and that as often as you look to Him you may obtain both "mercy, and grace to help." Nothing is better for you than a constant sense of your own frailty, with penitential sorrow on account of your failures. This keeps you in a constant readiness to receive the grace of God.

I have great hopes of you that you will hold out to the end, and my prayers ascend to God on your behalf. . . . Mama is, I am sorry to say, very poorly. She feels the effects of all the nursing she has had to do, and does not get very well over it. I wish the bazaar* was over that she might have a little rest. . . . Mama will perhaps have told you about the contemplated division of the Circuit; if it is properly carried out, it will add greatly to my comfort. . . .

Mr. Vasey wrote to one of his sons on his birthday :—

I am reminded that this is the anniversary of your birthday, and as I am not able to greet you in person, I just snatch a few minutes to offer you my congratulations and best wishes on the occasion. You are gradually pushing out into the great ocean of life, and seem to be widening the distance from the point of departure; one cannot but forecast storms and tempest before you get across to the port of final rest and safety. But I cannot say that I have any apprehensions about your safety, for I know that you are steering wisely, that you have marked out your course upon the chart, and if you keep to it you will be right at last. It is matter of unbounded gratitude to God for me that you have committed yourself and ways to the guidance of the Infallible One, and that whatever happens you will be safe in His keeping. May your path be as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." . . . The providence of God has

* The bazaar of which Mr. Vasey speaks in this letter proved a great success, realising above £2,000 for Circuit purposes.

hitherto in a very remarkable manner directed your steps, and will, I am persuaded, never forsake you as long as you walk uprightly. May you have many happy returns of your birthday! So prays your affectionate father, Thomas Vasey.

In answer to a childish attempt at a letter, he wrote to his eight-year old son from Conference:—.

Clevely, near Liverpool, August 6th, 1868.

MY DEAR FREDDY,

I was very glad to receive a note from you the other day, and take this first opportunity of replying to it. I have been both very busy and very poorly since your letter came, or would have answered it sooner. I suppose you are now going to school again, and will have plenty to do with your time; but I hope you attend as you can to mamma, and give her as little trouble as possible. You must make as much improvement as you possibly can this year at Mr. Shaw's, that you may be quite ready for Woodhouse Grove afterwards. I hope you do not forget to pray to God to make you a good boy, for unless you are good it will not matter how clever you are, you will not be happy. If you love Jesus you will be happy. Please to give Alfie and Nellie each a kiss, which I send in the corner of this note, and with much love I am your affectionate father, Thomas Vasey.

After the May District meeting he sought refreshment and invigoration in a series of short visits to his friends. From Croft he writes to his wife:—

I have had the unexpected pleasure of seeing your handwriting and reading one of your precious though costly epistles, which are next in order to my apprehension to the Apostolical epistles themselves. I have, however, the drawback of thinking that you paid too dear a price to produce it in your present weakly condition. It is indeed very uncomfortable to me to have so little time to enjoy the comforts of home, but I keep hoping that things will get over and that some interval of rest and quiet will return. However, this is not likely to be the case till after Conference, for I see nothing but work and worry in the meantime. The only consolation is that good is being done, and without that even rest itself would be insupportable. I am persuaded that my example in the way of work and earnestness has been beneficial to my colleagues both in the Circuit and District, and this is a source of satisfaction to me.

From Horsforth he writes to his daughter:—

We had a very good and profitable district meeting, though to me it was a time of anxiety and excitement. We report the largest increase of any district in the kingdom, and have only one Circuit which shows a decrease. Newcastle has contributed 141 to the general surplus, and has 199 members on trial. I am very thankful for this prosperity of the work of God, and it seems as if no toil or pain were too much to endure when such results follow. It is indeed a great

delight to me to preach Jesus, and a great satisfaction when I see people attracted by His dying love, and giving their hearts up to Him.

Mr. Vasey attended the Bristol Conference at the usual period (President, Rev. J. Bedford). Some extracts from his letters give a few glimpses of Conference proceedings, and of his own engagements at this season.

Bristol, July 19th, 1867. . . . I am delighted and amazed to find that our stationary work is for the present over and at so little cost to me. I have scarcely felt any pain or inconvenience whatever, and have kept tolerably clear of excitement by minding my own business. I am looking forward to Sunday with considerable anxiety and with a determination to do my duty, and trust to God to bless and help me. I have fixed upon "the day of Pentecost" for my subject. I hope there will not be many of the preachers there. . . .

July 22nd, 1867. . . . I had a very good night and woke up on Sunday morning in good physical trim for work, and with a peace of mind resulting from confidence in God. I found my way to the new chapel recently opened—Gothic, with steeple and tower. Dr. Hannah had been appointed, but not having yet arrived in Bristol, his place was supplied by Mr. Dwyer, one of the Irish representatives. In the afternoon I had a very effective out-door service notwithstanding the threatening and unsettled condition of the weather. We had a good staff of singers and took a considerable circuit round the neighbourhood. The people turned out of their homes in troops, and in all stages of dirt and dishabille, and showed great interest and attention—for the most part the stillness was as great as in Brunswick chapel. Towards the close my voice turned rather husky, and some charitable neighbour sent me a tumbler of water on a tray with a neat little crochet mat on it. I invited them to the service in the evening and had the pleasure of seeing a goodly number of them present. . . . Went on to the chapel at night. Found the vestry full of ministers and laymen. On going into the chapel found it full, with forms in the aisles; the ministers and lay members of committee present had to sit on the Conference platform, and the sight was very impressive and imposing. I felt power to cast myself on the Lord's promised help and found Him true to His word. It was indeed a season of great spiritual power. I called a prayer-meeting, at which there was a very large attendance, and after two brethren had prayed, I gave an address, during the course of which about a dozen persons came forward and fell down, several of them crying aloud for mercy. We staid till about 10 o'clock, and I think about six or seven found peace, amongst whom were several intelligent and respectable persons. I got home very tired, but in the morning felt quite happy and recruited, without any damage from my exertions, though you may believe I did not spare myself.

July 27th, 1867. . . . I went down to the Conference in the best spirits I have enjoyed for a long time, with a sweet sense of the love of God in my heart and a bright hope of glory. My heart is full of

gratitude to God for His goodness to us as a family, and for the general good will and confidence of my brethren in the ministry. . . . Well, after I posted my letter to you I dressed up in my best (and I assure you I was quite satisfied with my rig. One of the brethren came up to me, and said I was a specimen of a swell), and went off to the *soirée* given by Mr. Sheriff Lycett and Mrs. Lycett, and Mr. and Mrs. Budgett. We were introduced in due form on our arrival to our hosts and hostesses; the sheriff was in full dress with silk stockings, and, I think, short breeches with his velvet tail at the back of his neck and a beautiful and costly gold ornament suspended in front. The whole affair was a re-production of the old *soirées* at the Centenary Hall; there were not so many ladies present however. The evening passed off very pleasantly indeed; the whole wound up about 10.30 with worship, and a few complimentary speeches to our entertainers. . . . I have had several invitations to take open-air preaching to-morrow, but have declined on the ground of the necessity of husbanding my strength for the official work of next week, which I think is the most prudent course for me to take, though, perhaps, I shall not be able to resist the temptation to go down just before the service begins at Old Market Street, and address the people in the streets. . . . When you get this letter I shall have got over a fortnight of my period of absence from home, which is a thing scarcely credible, so swiftly has the time passed away. My attractions to home are stronger than ever, and all my treasures of earthly happiness are locked up there. There is nothing attracts me to heaven so much as the idea of a home, and the thought that I have part of my family there already, warms my heart at the prospect of the future.

July 30th, 1867. . . . I will give you the account of my Sunday's proceedings. In the morning I walked leisurely down to Old Market-street Chapel, and found the place densely filled and packed; could with difficulty get a seat on the platform. Mr. Arthur preached from "Be ye therefore perfect," &c. The sermon was plain, good, powerful, and attended by a divine unction which was very generally felt. . . . After dinner walked down again to Old Market-street. Intended to have got down in time to have a sing round the neighbourhood, and a short address, but found it was out of the question to attempt it. In fact there was no room for anybody that we might have drawn to the chapel, for the people could not get standing room; some were pouring out of the chapel. Mr. Bedford preached from the apostolic commission to St. Paul, "Turning them from darkness to light," &c. The sermon was very good; the text well expounded and applied, and the sermon listened to with great interest. Mr. B. called on me to pray at the close of the sermon, and afterwards asked me to give an address in the prayer-meeting, leaving the management of it in my hands. Stopped till nearly ten o'clock, very actively engaged in praying and talking to penitents, of whom there were about 6 or 7, several of whom found peace. Got home thoroughly tired, but very happy. . . .

In connection with the Session, the Rev. John Dwyer writes :—

I met Mr. Vasey at the Bristol Conference. Again I was favoured with meeting him in the domestic circle, as he was the guest of Mr. May, with whom I also sojourned for some days.

Several discussions occurred in Conference, in which Mr. Vasey took part, and I greatly admired the combined honesty and good humour by which his addresses were distinguished.

His circuit was then Newcastle-on-Tyne, where a remarkable revival of the work of God had been commenced; and his soul was filled with the Spirit from on High. He was eager to save precious souls. On one Sabbath evening I was going to Langton-street Chapel, where Mr. Wiseman was to preach, and came unexpectedly upon a crowd of people. To my astonishment and joy I found my valued friend Mr. Vasey in their midst, telling them the glad tidings of salvation.

At this Conference the Newcastle Circuit was divided into East and West Circuits, with good feeling and satisfaction on the part of most people concerned, Mr. Vasey's colleagues being the Revs. William Tyson and Joseph H. Slack. Mr. Tyson, who was in the circuit at the time of the change, refers to this among other things. He says:—

"Though I had heard of Mr. Vasey both as preacher and debater, and had formed a high estimate of his mental powers, it was not till his appointment to the Newcastle-on-Tyne Circuit, in 1866, that I had the pleasure of forming a personal acquaintance with him. During the two following years, in which it was my privilege to serve with him in the Gospel of the common salvation, we had the opportunity of frequent intercourse; which resulted in constantly increasing respect and esteem for him, and when the tidings of his decease at length arrived, I felt that I also had lost a friend.

"It is not needful for me to say a word as to his personal religious character. That was blameless. Evidently living in a state of habitual fellowship with God, and intensely loyal to the interests of the great Master, he was nevertheless frank, open, and genial, equally removed from austerity on the one hand, and levity on the other. He had become richly embued with the Spirit of Him who loved righteousness and hated iniquity; who came into the world to seek and save that which was lost, and who went about doing good. I have thought that his unsuspecting generosity was sometimes apt to be im

posed upon, but always admired his tender and large-hearted benevolence. To his colleagues he was uniformly kind and courteous; was jealous of their good name; took a deep interest in all that concerned them and their families, and never imposed upon them, or expected from them, any service, either in town or country, on Sabbath or week-day, in which he was not prepared to take a full and equal share.

"Our weekly preachers' meetings were oftentimes seasons of rich mental and spiritual profit, as he would not only recount to us the labours of the week, but give lively details of the services in which he had taken part, and telling us with great animation of points in his sermons which had excited his own mind, or taken hold of the hearts of his hearers, and of the results often most cheering, in the after prayer-meeting. Not always, however, did even he come off triumphant. Sometimes he, too, had hard, dry, and seemingly barren days, and was iable to sad depression of soul on that account. No one could have dealt wiser counsel than he to another who was becoming discouraged without sufficient cause; but anxious (I might almost say impatient), always he was himself for manifest fruit in the form of conversions, and liable to speak as if nothing had been accomplished if these were not forthcoming. I have thought that in respect to his own labours at least, he was apt to forget or to under estimate other,and perhaps equally important, though not equally palpable results of true gospel preaching. For "he that prophesieth, speaketh unto me to edification, and exhortation and comfort' (1 Cor. xiv. 3). He knew it well, but did not always remember the fact for his own comfort. He had a passion for saving souls, and rejoiced as with the joy of harvest when the desire of his heart was granted; and not in his own success alone, but equally in the success of his colleagues. Indeed, he seemed to take special delight in telling one or other of us that some one or more had been brought to Christ under such or such a sermon at this or that place, and of which till then we had heard nothing.

"Mr. Vasey's appointment to the Newcastle Circuit was most opportune. After a season of great discouragement his predecessor Mr. (now Dr.) Scott, had been able to report a small increase in the society at the March quarterly meeting, with a goodly number on trial. There was again an increase reported in June. About that time a devoted and earnest young man from one of the country circuits having obtained employment in one of the lowest parts of the town, and seeing how the people were self-abandoned to all kinds of evil-courses, was pressed in spirit to begin an aggressive mission work in the very midst of them. He had, I believe, a congregation of two at the first meeting. About the end of July, or early in August, the first conversions in the small upper room took place. On Mr. Vasey's arrival, after Conference, the particulars were reported to him, having been first given in a prayer-leader's meeting at Clarence Street Chapel. He at once entered into the matter with warm and earnest sympathy, and took an early opportunity which occurred of preaching in the room on a Sabbath evening, when some twelve or fourteen of the Tynesiders yielded to the power of the truth and avowed their resolution to begin a religious life. From that time the work grew with great rapidity, and days of wondrous grace were witnessed. Nor was the Revival confined to the Swirle, nor to the Newcastle Circuit, but extended throughout the district, fostered and helped forward by the constant and encouraging oversight of the Chief Pastor, the Chairman of the District.

None who were present can forget the September District Meeting of that year, held shortly after Mr. Vasey's arrival, and conducted by him; the spiritual tone given to it from the beginning; the special session for conversation and prayer on the state of the work of God, and how to promote its revival; and the public service held in the Blenheim Street Chapel in the evening. The resolutions then formed, and the desire and faith then crowned with rich communications of grace, at once prepared many, for a year of hard painstaking and hopeful

toil, and gave promise of rich success. The character of the September Quarterly Meeting, at which we again reported an increase, secured for the Newcastle Circuit, what the above session had secured for the district. From that time till September, 1868, there was heard no note of decrease, and in the course of two years and a half the number of members in the Newcastle Circuit had advanced from 1260 to 1894, or just one half more.

"In the mean time Mr. Vasey had succeeded in securing, by the generous aid of the Brunswick Place Chapel trustees, on the one hand, who assumed the debt of the Blenheim Street Chapel trustees, and the undaunted resolution and public spirit of some of the leading West End friends, on the other, in dividing the over-grown Newcastle Circuit with four ministers, into two, with six preachers. The finances also of the Circuit rising with the tide of spiritual prosperity, the pastors had accorded to them something more of temporal comfort without any resulting damage to their spiritual power. The popularity, however, of Mr. Vasey, whose labours had most materially contributed to the prosperity which made the division practicable, seemed likely at one time to imperil its immediate accomplishment, seeing that the friends in the proposed West Circuit, considering that they were, in some respects placed at a disadvantage as compared with those in the East, were resolved to make it a condition of their consent to the arrangement, that Mr. Vasey should become their first superintendent, thereby necessitating his removal from the Brunswick Place Circuit, in which he was already located. That difficulty, however, was at length, by patience and prudence, overcome, and the proposed division was carried into effect by the Conference of 1867, greatly to the advantage of all concerned.

"One thing which impressed me much at the time, though not specially in connection with the above, and which I must not omit to mention, was the great self-restraint which Mr. Vasey manifestly imposed upon himself in conducting official meetings. All know that,

where a number of men of strong intelligence and a proper sense of independent personal accountability, meet together for the transaction of business connected with the Church's welfare, differences of opinion will obtain and be sometimes strongly expressed. There were cases in which some differed in judgment from Mr. Vasey, and did not hesitate to give frank expression to such difference, though they knew the fulness of his conviction, and the warmth of his interest in the subject. Yet, though he sometimes felt keenly, and had manifestly a hard internal struggle, he never failed to preserve that true self-government which is so essentially requisite for the successful government of others.

"Mr. Vasey was not without an honourable ambition. He hoped, and had he lived no doubt the hope would have been realized, to fill the highest ecclesiastical position in Methodism. He was persuaded that, by the grace of God, he could render effective service to the interests of Methodism and the cause of Christ. His hope was suddenly cut off, when apparently just on the point of fulfilment. I shall not forget how, shortly before the assembling of that Conference at which we had confidently anticipated his election, he said to me, 'That is all gone. It is as though the thought had never been entertained; as though it had been written upon a slate and completely sponged out. It is clearly the will of God that it should be so, and I fully acquiesce.' When parting he bade me to tell how he was firmly fixed on the Rock of ages, and that the Saviour he had preached to others did not fail himself."

Mr. Vasey's excessive toil during this first year in Newcastle had been lightened and alleviated by the kind assistance of friends to a great extent, but had been gradually telling upon him, and resulted in great physical weakness, and an increased liability to dreadful attacks of pain. These were caused by heart spasms, and often obliged him to stop in the street and even to cling to a lamp post or door handle for support until the worst had passed. This state of things reached its

climax on Sunday afternoon, October 18th, when on getting home after taking a morning appointment in the country, he staggered into the hall, sat down on a chair, and rolled on to the floor in a state of agony, that though prolonged, seemed every moment on the point of ending his life. The way he went about his work with the certainty of these fearful attacks overtaking him, could be called nothing less than heroism; for it may safely be said that he very rarely, for this reason, refused to make an engagement, or failed to carry out one when made.

In Newcastle Mr. Vasey had opportunities for turning to good account his decided talent for finance, and left the Circuit with a considerably increased income and heightened reputation on this account. One scheme which was very successful was this; the names in the class-book were considered one by one, and a list was made of those who might fairly be asked to increase their givings in the class; and on application being made to them, the result was, in the majority of cases, a ready response. By this simple means a considerable addition to the regular income of the Circuit resulted.

On July 20th, 1868, Mr. Vasey left home for the Liverpool Conference, where he was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Leather, of Clevely. He felt unfortunately very ill-fitted for the extra work and excitements alway associated with this gathering. He was in a state of great nervous prostration, and discharged his duties with difficulty. He however made during the Conference a speech on his favourite subject, "The Work of God," which produced a good effect at the time, and which we are able to give in extenso, thanks to the kindness of a minister who was present.

On being unexpectedly called upon to speak, Mr. Vasey said—

MR. PRESIDENT,—If I can say anything that will be of service, I shall be very glad; but I feel very incompetent to do so, and very unworthy to occupy any prominent position in a conversation like this. I cordially reciprocate the sentiments which have just been thrown out. The principle on which I entered the ministry was, that

from that time it would be my business to save souls, and ever since then, whenever I have been any length of time without visible success, I have felt that I was wasting time; that I was useless, and I have thought and felt that a useless Methodist preacher is above all things the greatest piece of lumber in the world. I have gone home many a time on a Sunday night, when I have seen no results, feeling just like a tradesman who has stood all day behind his counter and not had a single customer, or taken a single penny. I suppose that a tradesman in such a position, if he continued in it for a few weeks, would soon give up his business, and that has been just my feeling. Whenever I have laboured, as I thought, in vain, I have felt as if I had not got into the right line, and that I had missed my way. I have suffered more on this account than I can describe. I have never been tempted to infidelity so as to doubt the doctrine of Holy Scripture; I have had a singularly clear perception and apprehension of the doctrines of the Gospel; but I have been tempted to infidelity in some of its most revolting and blasphemous forms, after labouring for some time without visible results. I have felt at such times like a physician who has prescribed for his patients, and yet sees them dying in his hands on all sides; and the temptations I have suffered on that ground have surpassed all I have suffered on any other ground whatever. I have many a time wished to die, and many a time asked to die. If I had not had a very decided call, I should have given up long since. But I could not revoke the call without first going to Him from whom I received it. I have gone to Him and asked Him either to take me to heaven, or to send me to some other post of duty where I could feel that I was doing His will, and that I was in my providential path. Two years ago the Conference sent me to Newcastle—the last place to which I would have chosen to go, and an invitation to which I had refused. But I accepted the designation, and I went with the determination to do all the good I could. Shortly after my arrival in that circuit, I began to preach a course of sermons on the "Beatitudes." In preaching on that text, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," the sermon was applied to me as strongly as if somebody else had spoken it to me, and I felt that I must just be content to let God fill me and use me. That has been my motto and maxim during the two years I have been in Newcastle. I have been enabled by the grace of God to keep to that point, and when I have been the most poor in spirit, I have been the most enriched with spiritual influences, and have been made the most useful in the work of God. I should be very sorry, however, if my brethren were to connect the revival of God's work in Newcastle with me in particular. That would not be a correct view of the case. Before I went into the district a good work had been commenced, and a good deal of the success has been owing to the united co-operation of all the brethren in the district. There has been amongst both circuits and ministers a generous competition as to which could save the most souls. I was surprised that I was received with such cordiality. Everybody seemed to expect good, and everybody co-operated with me in the work. I think that in itself was the work of God. Such was the confidence which the people had in me, and so ready were they to co-operate with me, that I had no difficulty

whatever in getting any thing I wanted carried out. I have endeavoured to act upon two principles. I value the conversion of a soul under whatever circumstances that conversion may be brought about, and I like *public* conversions. I like to see people getting into classes, going to other people, and inquiring about religion, and in a quiet and unobserved manner connecting themselves with the cause of God; but I think for all aggressive purposes a single public conversion is worth half-a-dozen of those private ones. I think it has a very beneficial influence upon a congregation to see penitents—or, in case there are no penitents—to see that penitents are expected. In a word (if you will forgive a mercantile expression) it is a good thing to let people see that we want to do business. In Newcastle, we have seen some of the worst specimens of sinful humanity brought under the regenerating power of the Gospel, and, in the comparative sense I have just indicated, I think that the conversion of one notorious sinner may be said to be worth the conversion of half-a-dozen people whose lives were so proper before their conversion that they would hardly see the transition—whose external conduct was so correct, that there was nothing in the change of that conduct calculated to excite attention. We have found that by securing the conversion of a few notoriously depraved and bad characters we have given people—worldly people who do not come to our chapels—an idea of the power of the Gospel such as they never had before. For this reason I went down into the lowest part of the town, gathered a small congregation together, and preached to them. Now with me it is a maxim not to preach hell and damnation to such people, but always to take the most encouraging subject, such as the love of God, the power of the Holy Ghost, the possibility of their getting saved and elevated. I preached on the occasion I now refer to, from the healing of the demoniac child. There were some of the most notorious characters present—men of the worst possible type—and I told those people that if they would try to go to Christ He would help them, for Christ was stronger than the devil; the devil had taken advantage of them, and done them a great deal of mischief, but there was a chance after all of their getting to Christ. When I had done this, I asked those who wished to get out of the grasp of the devil to come forward, and to my surprise some thirteen or fourteen of those fellows responded to the invitation, and asked me to pray for them. I tried to get them to pray for themselves. They said, "Sir, we cannot pray. We nivver prayed afore. Yo mun tel us what to say." So I had to extemporise a little liturgy for them (I never saw the advantage of a liturgy so much before), and they repeated or shouted the words, crying aloud for mercy. One man, a great pugilist, rose up and said, "Friends, I sud'nt like ye ta' gang away withaaght hearin me. I be gotten summat to-neet which if I nobbut keep, I sal be a better man as long as I live." That man has been a very consistent character ever since. I mention that for the purpose of saying that I believe that by reason of the success which God has given us in that low neighbourhood, an impulse has been given to every religious community in that town. The ministers of Independent and Presbyterian congregations came to our meetings to spy the land, and they heard what gave them an idea of the power of religion such as they could

not have got anywhere else. People from miles round about came to our meetings to get converted; they had got an idea that the power of God was present with us, and they went back to their homes telling what great things God had done for them. That work has gone on with great steadiness, and we now have a very valuable society there, that it would do any of you good to go and preach to. It is wonderful to see how those who used to be the most savage in the whole neighbourhood, are now as tender, and quiet and tractable as lambs. The way in which they come to shake hands with me is something remarkable. A great fellow overtook me one day as I was walking up the hill (I was feeling very ill at the time), and said, "Will yo like ta' have a lift?" and he gave me his arm. When we had proceeded a short distance, the man said, "Nah, a' think yo'd better stop a bit afore y' go any farther an git yer breath." Now that was a man who had not a single refined idea about him before he was converted, and yet he was as tender towards me as a mother towards her child. Religion brings out the finer feelings and sensibilities of human nature, which we should fancy had been completely overlaid with diabolical and almost infernal passions and lusts.

For the sake of any good it may do, I will mention another thing. We have encouraged the people to do all the good they could in their own way. I said to them, "I expect every one of you to do all you can for the work of God. If you get your legs over the traces I will pull you up directly, but until you do get wrong go on doing all the good you can in your own way every one of you." Accordingly those people, without consulting me at all, are holding prayer-meetings, and fellowship-meetings, &c., and I believe that all the good that I can do is as nothing compared with what those people are doing. In every court and alley of the town they are stopping people and talking to them about their souls. I do not think it would be becoming in me to occupy more of the time of the Conference. I will only say further that the division of the Circuit in Newcastle has done a great deal of good. There are now two additional ministers upon the ground, and the appointment of Joshua Mason to the superintendency of the new Circuit has been a very good thing. The division is acting well. Scarcely a single point has been left untried to prosper the work of God in both Circuits. I am not aware that I have anything more to add. I am going back to my Circuit with the intention of devoting the last year of my labours in it to the service of God, if possible, more fully than I have done before. During the first year of my labours in that Circuit, I suffered so much that I hardly ever went out of the house, without expecting to be carried home dead. I had frequently to stand still in the street, and lay hold of a lamp-post or anything else that would afford me a little support. But I have this conviction that I was sent there to do some good, in spite of weakness, in spite of frost or snow, or anything else. I believe God had a work for me to do, and I am thankful to say I am the better for it. I am not at all concerned about living, but I am determined by the help of God, to do as much good as I possibly can. My object is not to spare myself but to save souls.

His hostess at the Conference writes:—"We cherish

very happy memories of Mr. Vasey's sojourn in our house. His prayers, his conversation, his whole demeanour told of habitual communion with God."

From Liverpool Mr. Vasey went with his friend Mr. McAulay to the Isle of Man for two or three days, and thence home. But after a week or two of circuit work it was clear he must recruit, and so it was kindly arranged that he should be enabled to take a holiday, which he spent with his eldest son on the West coast of Scotland, and came back rid of his bad symptoms, and decidedly strengthened.

In October of this year (1868) Mr. Vasey joined the Revs. the President, L. H. Wiseman, and J. Bond as a deputation to the Leeds Missionary Anniversary. He spoke at the public meetings in two circuits, and attended the missionary breakfast held as usual at the house of Mr. Smith, of Gledhow, but the service he regarded with most favour, because yielding the most valuable results, was the sermon he preached at his old Chapel, Brunswick Place. Of his sermon he gives a poor account in his letter home, but he held, with him, the usual prayer meeting afterwards. This was happy and profitable, and at the conclusion he was able to set down as his hire "seven souls." It was because he was so very generally made the means of bringing penitents to Jesus that he enjoyed these extra-parochial services so much.

In March, 1869, Mr. Vasey yielded to a request from his friends at Belfast for his assistance at anniversary services. His friend Mr. Cuthbert Bainbridge accompanied him on this visit.

We give an extract from a letter written after the Sabbath engagements :—

Windsor, Belfast, March 15th, 1869. . . . I am thankful to say that I got through my work very comfortably, and I trust to the profit of the people. My subject in the morning was "Christ before Herod," which I had studied carefully the night before, and in the delivery of which I was graciously assisted, so that I think it never went better. The chapel was full, and the people intelligent and attentive; the portion of the congregation contributed by the College was a noticeable and interesting feature, and amounted to sixty-five persons.

In the evening had a good time from the "Rent Veil." Congregation again full; chapel very hot; prayer-meeting afterwards till ten; three penitents, and large attendance of members. Many were at the services from Donegal-square. The chapel is a curious specimen of Lombardo-Venetian architecture, with a high tower, and capable of holding 700 persons; the interior is very commodious, and the arrangements good for speaking and hearing. Got home at half-past ten; had a good night, and got up quite fresh this morning, but thought it best to keep quiet in the house all day. C. B. is improving very fast, and enjoying himself very much. . . .

Mr. Vasey returned home to his duties greatly refreshed, both in body and mind, having been favoured with much success in his labours.

In June he accompanied, as Representative, his friend the President (Rev. S. R. Hall), in his attendance at the Irish Conference held at Cork. Numerous quotations from interesting letters to his wife during his absence will not, we think, be unacceptable to the reader :—

Wesleyan Conference, Cork, June 16th, 1869. . . . I attended the Home Missionary meeting last night. It was very well attended, and the speeches were serious, earnest, and practical. The prayer-meeting was held at twelve; attendance not large, but the spirit of prayer was there, and two laymen, in particular, had great liberty and power in prayer. We have each been introduced to the Conference, and have made short speeches, which were very well received.

Last night, about nine or ten o'clock, there was an attack made by a party of four Fenians on a house within a mile and a-half of us. One of them was shot, and the rest took off, leaving their comrade in the lurch, who is not expected to recover, but refuses to reveal his comrades' names. I have no fear, but rather the contrary, and I hope you will not be uneasy about me as long as I am about my Master's business. . . .

June 19th, 1869.—We have had a dinner party, of about thirty-five to forty persons, to commemorate this as the 100th session of the Irish Conference, and have had a very plain, homely, and enjoyable party, free from affectation, ostentation, and adulation. At the request of the President, no toasts were drunk, but various sentiments proposed, to draw out speeches from the representatives and others, which were all of a practical and serious character, including just as much humour and wit as were necessary to preserve geniality and cheerfulness. I am just taking advantage of the interval of an hour before the love feast begins, to write this letter to you.

June 21st, 1869. . . . We had a very good love-feast at 7 p.m. on Saturday. The attendance of the people, considering the evening, which was a very unfavourable time, was very good, and the preachers mustered in great force. It was a very good meeting, and prepared us all for the Sunday. Had a very good night's rest, and woke up on

the Sunday morning in good spirits and working trim. Went down to the morning service at half-past 10, and heard the President from "Our word came to you not in word only," &c., a most powerful, telling discourse, accompanied by a Divine influence which everybody appeared to feel.

My host kindly provided me with a conveyance up both at the morning and evening services. Had my nap after dinner as usual, and rather overslept myself, so that I only got about half-an-hour of Mr. Arthur's sermon from "I am the light of the world," which was very good. At night great numbers of people came from considerable distances, and the place was crammed to suffocation. I was soon reduced to a condition which made me reckless as to the amount of exertion I put forth, since I could not be worse. I had for my text, Acts ii. 5, "And when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts," &c. I had made up my mind to sacrifice all attempts to maintain a reputation as a preacher, and to apply myself to the question of revivalistic methods of preaching the Gospel and saving souls. I had liberty from first to last; the people appreciated, and sometimes audibly expressed their assent, and so did many preachers. We held a prayer-meeting afterwards, when the floor of the chapel was covered, and about twenty penitents came forward, most of whom professed to find peace. It was indeed a very gracious time, and I hope the effect of it will be felt all over Ireland during the year. The preachers were delighted to see the President and Representative going up and down talking to penitents. I did not get home till past 11 o'clock, but slept tolerably well, and am no worse to-day.

June 22nd, 1869. . . . Since I wrote you yesterday I have to report that I had a glorious time last night at the second Chapel in the town, where we extemporised a service, and got a good congregation together. I preached from "Bartimæus," with a good deal of quiet earnestness and liberty. On inviting penitents forward, there was at once a response, and, in two or three minutes, the communion-rail was filled, and forms at each side of it occupied. I was almost ready to sink at the sight of so many, for there was no other preacher present. So I set to work as well as I could; kept the people going with inquiry and occasionally praying, whilst I talked to the penitents, and rested now and then by giving out a verse or two, in which the penitents might join in prayer. I found many of them Presbyterians, who knew nothing of class-meetings, but caught at them; some, backsliders; others, who were meeting in class, but without religious experience; and a good many young people, children of Methodists, whose parents were with them, and who begged me to give special attention to them. I could scarcely get the people sent away, and the penitents would not stir, and kept sending for me, saying that they were very near salvation, and a few words of help might set them at liberty. It was past ten o'clock before I got released, and when I got up home I could scarcely lift my hand to my mouth. I had, however, a good night's rest, and am as fresh as a lark this morning, and very happy in my soul. I cannot tell how many found peace—I really had not time to count them—but there must have been at least twenty-five penitents, of whom I think the greater part found comfort.

This is worth coming to Ireland for.

June 23rd, 1869. . . . We had a very excellent ordination service last night. Chapel crowded in every part; many members of other religious communities present. Five young men were received into full connexion, and were ordained. I had to take part in the act of imposition of hands, and felt it to be a solemn duty, and particularly as indicating to me the more serious position and responsible duty to which the course of time and events are moving me on. I trust that a greater increase of grace will be given to me to enable me to fill up any position that Providence may assign to me. Mr. Hall has won golden opinions from everybody, both preachers and people, and will leave behind him an excellent savour. They say that they have not for many years had such a spiritual, happy, and business-like session.

June 24th, 1869.—We had a good closing of Conference—abundance of thanks, and good wishes, and shaking of hands, with many desires for my return to them. I am very thankful that so good an impression has been produced, and I trust it will extend all over Ireand.

At the close of the Conference Mr. Vasey with the President sought refreshment in a visit of two or three days to the Lakes of Killarney, and on his return journey preached at Donegal Square, Belfast, to his old friends.

Mr. Dwyer says, in allusion to his presence at the Cork Conference:—"The third time that we met was in 1869, in the city of Cork. He was appointed to accompany the then President, his esteemed friend the Rev. Samuel R. Hall, to the Irish Conference. There he preached with much power. Nor was he content with preaching only. He did not leave the prayer-meeting to class-leaders or to ministers of less prominence. He waited to draw the net ashore, and was the means during those Conference services of leading sinners to Christ. It seemed to me a beautiful thing to see one now possessed of Connexional standing and influence, and who seemed likely soon to fill the Presidential chair, thus identifying himself with the work of God in its various forms, and showing an example of perseverance and of zeal to younger men.

"I, with many others, expected to have met Mr. Vasey yet once more at all events. It would have been a great gratification if we had been permitted to welcome him to our green isle as President of the Irish Conference.

But it is not for us to repine because this was denied us. We know that he has gone to still nobler service in the skies; and we know that he was taken to it just at the proper time by Him who 'doth all things well.' May we have grace to follow him as he followel Christ."

The term of Mr. Vasey's sojourn at Newcastle-on-Tyne was rapidly closing, and looking to the future he writes to his sister:—"I am now in my third year at Newcastle, and shall not know where my next billet will be till nearly the close of the Conference, as I have determined to leave any appointment entirely in the hands of others, and not to hamper myself by any engagement, though I think I must have had nearly twenty invitations. My usefulness has been so great, since came here by appointment of Conference, and against my own wishes that I dare not any longer choose for myself."

Conference being held at Hull this year, Mr. Vasey had the happiness of spending some weeks under the roof of Captain John Krüger, one of his old friends there; during which time his health considerably improved. He wrote home from Conference, as he always did, many most interesting letters, containing very full accounts and frank criticisms of what he did himself, and of what he heard and witnessed. Though we should like well to abstract some of them, this quality of frankness, though adding greatly to their interest, makes us shrink from printing them.

To his sister, at the close of the Conference, he wrote: "For my own part, I am thankful that my health is so greatly, and I may say wonderfully, improved. I have stood the labour and excitement of this Conference remarkably well, and shall go home better rather than worse. You will see that I am to go to Sunderland, which is very ageeable to me. I hope that there is a good prospect of usefulness before me, both in the circuit and the district. We have had upon the whole a good Conference. I trust the prospects of the Connexion are hopeful, but there are many hindrances from among ourselves which require to be overcome, before we shall make much further progress. I am convinced of three things, viz., 1. That the country is passing through a great religious crisis; 2. That Methodism is the only religious body which seems qualified by its doctrines and organization to save the country; 3. That the Methodists, as a body, are not prepared to meet the emergency. May the Lord help us!

Mr. Vasey was no doubt influenced in coming to these conclusions by the issue of the discussion which was the result of a speech made by him in the Home Missionary Committee of Review, just before the opening of Conference. He strongly urged the necessity of conversions under every sermon, but writes—"This speech, however, has served to bring out, both among preachers and laymen, the other view, that instruction, and a certain kind of edification of the people of God, is the main end of the Christian Church, and shows that we must expect opposition from both quarters." Mr. Vasey afterwards mentions that "Thomas Jackson and Dr. Dixon have each addressed a long letter to the Conference, which will be published, and, singularly enough, they both urge the same point, viz., that we should have more pulpit power and more direct aim in our preaching at soul-saving results."

In the letter to his sister quoted above, Mr. Vasey says he was appointed to Sunderland. This had been fixed after the claims of places, North, South, East and West, in the country, had been argued in the Stationing Committee. It was "agreeable" to him, because he expected to revisit people and places that he had known as a young man, and he returned home in good spirits to prepare for the removal.

In addition to what we have already recounted of Mr. Vasey's life and labours at Newcastle, we can only mention a few things which will show the range of his sympathies.

He took his part in a large camp-meeting held by the Wesleyans of the town on "the Leazes," when four services were conducted simultaneously.

At another time, the Secularists and Infidels of the town persuaded the Mayor to call a Town's-meeting, from which they intended to forward a resolution to the Members of Parliament, condemning severely Christian Missions to China. Mr. Vasey, with a few friends, forming a sort of forlorn hope, went to the meeting to challenge its verdict. He was received with terrific howls, but,

by dint of skilful appeals to their sense of fair play, &c., interjected now and again, he managed to secure the hearing, at least, of a few truths.

He connected himself with the Early Closing Association; and, as a correlative effort, he gave one of a series of evening lectures delivered, by request of the principals, to some hundreds of young men employed in one of the largest Draper's Establishments in the town.

When the first public meeting, at the commencement of the Education agitation, was held in the Town Hall, Mr. Vasey, from his past intimate connection with the subject, seemed naturally to take a prominent place, and made a successful and popular speech.

At the request of the Young Men's Christian Association, he preached in Brunswick Chapel a sermon with special reference to *Ecce Homo*, Renan's *Vie de Jesu*, and the doctrines of Strauss.

We close our chronicle of Newcastle-on-Tyne Circuit by giving two records kindly furnished: the first by a member of his class, and the second by Messrs. Thwaites and Smirke.

The first says:—

When we first heard that Mr. Vasey was appointed to the Newcastle Circuit, an ex-President was staying at my father's house, and I shall not soon forget his reply to our enquiry, "What sort of a man is Mr. Vasey?" "He is a *man*—and a *man of God*."

This he proved to be in the fullest sense of the words. He was always himself, a man; in and out of the pulpit the same natural, manly, straightforward character, that all young men felt they could respect.

Two things always came prominently before my mind as I heard him preach, viz. his naturalness, and the reality of his earnestness. All who knew him in private life felt he was himself in the pulpit, and many felt that his ardent earnestness in preaching was the direct and immediate result of earnest application in his closet. His sermons were sometimes like an electric shock going through the congregation, so powerful was the holy unction which accompanied his preaching.

As a class-leader he was the same kind, genial, real, natural, faithful, Mr. Vasey. He could be very severely faithful. I well recollect his reply to one who stated that certain symptoms of spiritual lassitude and disinclination to prayer had caused him certain misgivings as to his real spiritual condition. "And you may well feel uneasy, and have serious misgivings as to your state," said Mr. Vasey, and then

urged him never to rest till he had better reason to say, "peace, peace," to his soul.

A journeyman shoemaker, who I am glad to count my friend, told me that previous to Mr. Vasey coming to Newcastle, he had for seven years gone from one place of worship to another, seeking rest to his soul. He, however, never felt sufficient confidence in any minister he ever heard to induce him to go and unburden his heart to him. At length he heard Mr. Vasey, and he said to himself, "That's the most real man I've heard yet," but still he could not make up his mind to consult him, until one night, about nine o'clock, Mr. Vasey stumbled up his dark rickety stairs, to speak to him about good things, when the shoemaker said to himself, "This is real earnestness; this is the man for me to open my mind to," and in a few weeks he was led to the Saviour, as was also his wife; both of whom have ever since been earnest working Christians.

That portion of the work, however, in which Mr. Vasey took the greatest interest, was the Revival in that lowest and most degraded part of Newcastle called Sandgate, principally that portion of Sandgate known as the "Swirle."

Mr. Thwaites gives the added narrative of the work in which Mr. Vasey took especial interest and delight:—

THE SWIRLE MISSION.—DESCRIPTION OF SWIRLE.

In this spiritually destitute neighbourhood, a young man from the Alston Circuit came to live. He was shocked at the shameless profligacy of the people, and felt that, in addition to his own faithful testimony among the workmen immediately around him, something *more* must be done. He therefore (in July, 1866) engaged a room at his own expense, and, in connection with another of the same mind, commenced a cottage prayer-meeting. This effort, undertaken from a pure motive, and in a prayerful spirit, was blessed of God. A few women were first brought together, and to them the tale "Buy your own Cherries" was read; delighted with it, they proposed to bring their husbands on another evening to hear the tale: this they did, and the room being crowded, it was again read. Soon after this, several were deeply impressed, and one or two converted, and each Sunday evening the room was crowded with men and women belonging to the immediate neighbourhood, who suddenly found themselves changed into earnest and anxious hearers of the Word. A night-school was now established, and held twice a week, for those who desired to improve their *minds*, concurrently with their *lives*. Three-quarters of an hour (not more) was given to the school work proper; then one of "John Ashworth's Strange Tales" was read, and the school closed with singing and prayer. About this time, Mr. Vasey came to the Newcastle Circuit, and on Sunday, September 16, after preaching an anniversary sermon at Clarence-street in the afternoon, he, instead of remaining to hear a stranger preach at night, paid his first visit to the Swirle Cottage meeting, accompanied by his son, and a young man as guide. He was so much exhausted and in such pain on his arrival at the room, that he had to sit and rest,

while a young man opened the meeting with singing and prayer, after which Mr. V. preached from Luke ix. 42, "And when he was yet a coming, the Devil threw him down." This was a most appropriate subject for the occasion, as many had been convinced of sin, and there were great hindrances in their way. As Mr. V. was urging those present to cast aside every obstacle, and to come at once to Jesus, a number of men arose, and, instead of coming *round* the forms, they came *direct over them*, and throwing themselves down against the table behind which Mr. Vasey was standing, literally *roared*, *shouted*, *groaned*, and *prayed*. How many professed to "come to Jesus" that evening we cannot tell, but on the Wednesday of the same week, Mr. Vasey met the anxious inquirers again, and sixteen names were taken down by Brother Black to meet in class on the following Sunday. Several more than the sixteen came, and in a few weeks Brother Black's class increased to seventy attendants. In the beginning of December, a large loft, capable of holding upwards of 400 persons, which had been long used as a receptacle for lumber and rubbish, was taken. It was in a filthy condition, the floor being covered eight or ten inches thick with debris of various kinds. This, however, was cleared away by a few days' hearty, earnest, and gratuitous labour on the part of half-a-dozen of the new converts, strong, burly men, who were accustomed to the rough work of loading and unloading vessels on the river. They whitewashed the room, decorated it with evergreens and flags, and on Christmas-day the first tea-meeting was held, at which Mr. Vasey was present. On Sunday, the 20th of January, 1867, Mr. Vasey conducted the first of a series of special services; at this first service there were thirty-one penitents. Among others was a woman with a baby in her arms. Addressing her, Mr. Vasey said, "Come, baby and all to Jesus," and she, handing her baby to a woman sitting near, went up among the seekers, and found rest for her soul. The woman who held the baby was also soon found among the penitents. Mr. Vasey preached again on the Thursday night, and very frequently afterwards; and for many months a work of awakening and conversion was constantly in progress.

On Easter Monday, another tea meeting was held, at which 530 people were present. A very lively band meeting was conducted after tea by Mr. V., and many genuine experiences were given, some of the most notorious characters of the neighbourhood having to tell of the happy substitution of social happiness, domestic comfort, cleanliness, and thrift, in place of the dirt, the squalor, and the domestic brawls—the inseparable concomitants of a drunken and dissolute life.

Shortly after this time, the agent for the late Sir John Fife, who owned a large quantity of the property in the Swirle neighbourhood, said to the writer, "What a wonderful change has come over the Swirle people; my man there has not half the 'dunning' to do he used to have; the rent money is ready for him every week when he calls." This good work soon spread to Clarence-street Chapel, where, at a week evening's service, there were several penitents. The influence extended also into the Sunday-school, and a large

number of the elder scholars were hopefully converted, many of whom "continue to this day."

The amount of good done by the agency at the Swirle cannot now be fully ascertained. The revival work being noised abroad through the surrounding district, numbers of persons came as far as six and eight miles to attend the services; many of whom received spiritual blessing, and, returning home, joined the various country societies.

Many sailors, out of vessels hailing from all parts of the world, found their way to the preaching service, several of whom found their way to the "Seekers'" bench, and some, we believe, to Jesus.

Whilst the good seed of the kingdom was being sown so successfully, the great adversary did not forget to sow *tares*. Just about this time, a man named C—— ingratiated himself into the confidence of a large number of the members at the Swirle, and established a "Sick Benefit Club," of which he constituted himself *Secretary, Treasurer, and Visitor*. As he was only a working-man, in receipt of weekly wages, Mr. Vasey very properly considered him an unfit person to be entrusted with large sums of money. He therefore called a meeting, and suggested that C—— should relinquish the office of treasurer in favour of some person of known commercial standing. This, however, C—— stoutly refused to do. Mr. V. then asked him to withdraw from the Mission. He refused to do this, and in the end was expelled by the Leaders' meeting. He carried away with him a large number of men, most of whom, however, only *very recently* connected themselves with the Mission. Notwithstanding this unfortunate division, the work of God still went on gloriously, and until the following May (1868) the Mission's power for good in the neighbourhood was continuously on the increase. The first falling away took place on Saturday, May 4th, and Monday, May 6th, on which days two great *champion boat-races* was held. None except those who live on the banks of the Tyne can fully appreciate the Tynesider's overwhelming interest in, and excitement about, a champion boat-race. Factories are emptied of their workmen, and closed for the time a boat-race is being held. Many thousands of persons (nine-tenths of them working-men) crowd the banks, and shout with all their might to their favourite boat-rower, "Had a way, Harry," or "Pull away, Bob," as the case may be.

Most of the Swirle converts were "on the water," *i.e.*, were connected with works in the vessels on the river Tyne, and all had participated in the excitement and dissipation incident to Tyneside boat-races. After the evening service at Clarence-street Chapel, on Sunday, May 5th, one of the friends informed Mr. Vasey that there had been a boat-race on the previous day, and that several of the new converts had been carried away by the overwhelming excitement, and had been seen tipsy, and that there was a possibility of a recurrence of the sad event, at the other race which was to take place the following day. Mr. Vasey at once acted with characteristic promptitude. By his instructions, a large bill was immediately printed, and posted on the quay side, announcing counter attractions at the Swirle Mission Room. He then engaged the Rev. Peter McKenzie, who gave an address in the afternoon, and Rev. Joseph Dawson, who preached in the evening. This special effort was successful in occu-

pying the minds of the Swirle men, and thus keeping them out of the vortex of the race excitement, At this time, about 150 persons were meeting in class at the Swirle, although I understand Mr. Vasey never returned more than 50 (?) persons as members. A branch mission was now established at the Close, another part of the quay side—a few hundreds of yards west of the Swirle. Mr. Vasey frequently conducted out-door services there, accompanied by a band of the Swirle men. At one of these services an incident occurred, which is worth recording. On one of the evenings on which a Wesleyan bazaar was being held in the Town Hall, Mr. Vasey, leaving that scene of dissipating excitement, went to conduct an out-door service at the Close. A woman, who was on her way to commit suicide by throwing herself into the river, was attracted by the singing; stood and listened, then followed the friends into the room where the prayer-meeting was held, and there confessing on what errand she had been bound, and how she had been providentially stopped, she was, we have reason to believe, led to the Saviour of the despairing and the lost. Early in 1869, the Corporation gave notice that they required the use of the large Mission Room, and in March the friends had to leave the place which had become so endeared to them by its associations. Shortly after this, Mr. Vasey left the circuit. The Swirle friends were thus in a few months deprived of a suitable room wherein to meet, and what proved to be still worse, of the friend whom they loved as a father in Christ, and to whom they all looked up for counsel and direction, and they were thus left without anyone specially to lead and advise them.

The usual consequences of a number of uneducated men—all much on a par—meeting together, occurred. Disunion sprang up, and soon a number became disaffected and unsettled, and not having root in themselves, fell away.

It is worthy of note (and those who have mission work on hand cannot take the lesson *too much* to heart), that the *mediate* or *immediate* cause of *almost every case* of backsliding was *strong drink*. For a working man to take strong drink at all involves a visit to the "Public House;" hence, contact with old boon companions in vice, and such "running into temptation" is always dangerous. It is also worthy of record, that among the backsliders there is scarcely one to be found who attended the night school for a period of six months, which goes to prove that true conversion leads a man to improve his talents.

As to the permanent results of the mission, what are they? Well, first of all, there are at present fifty-five members, meeting in class in connection with the new chapel, which has superseded the old Swirle Mission Room. A number of the backsliders are, we believe, only *temporarily* lost; one of them told a member a short time ago, that when he heard them singing past his house, the bitter tears would run down his cheeks as he remembered the blessedness of bygone days, and what he had lost. Many also of the fallen have still a "warm side" to the "Mission," and will, we hope and believe, be again brought into the fold. Many have left the neighbourhood, retaining the good work which was begun there. Among others is a City Missionary in

London; another, a local preacher at Jarrow. Many are dead; some died suddenly; indeed, within a short period, several met with sudden death. One, before leaving home, early in the morning, spoke earnestly to his mother, telling her, there was no time to lose, and beseeching her to give her heart to God; before eight o'clock that morning he was brought home to her a corpse.

Another, in class, on the Sunday afternoon, spoke of his readiness to depart, and at an early hour the next day he dropped down dead. Many who died a natural death, died blessing the Mission which had brought the sweet light of the Gospel message into that dark, neglected, reprobated neighbourhood.

Mr. Smirke has kindly furnished the following additional particulars:—

Before the large Mission was opened, the services were conducted in a small room, capable of holding 80 people.

In the case of a person named Harry Tarrier, a great drunkard, his conversion is directly traceable to Mr. Vasey.

He had been drinking for some time, and in his madness jumped out of his house window and broke his leg. Invited by a friend, he went to the little room on crutches, and returned a second time to hear the story of "Buy your own Cherries." Being a little improved, on his second visit he used sticks only, one in each hand.

A short time after, in September, 1866, Mr. Vasey kindly consented to preach in the room in question. Harry was invited to come and hear him, and, being told that Mr. Vasey "was a very great man," he made the effort the third time, and, besides going himself, he went in search of others, and fifteen of his old drunken companions went with him, some of whom are still enjoying the religion of Jesus. Mr. Vasey took as a text, John iii. 36—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Harry states that as Mr. Vasey proceeded, he thought he was always looking at him, and believed, too, that somebody had been telling him about his previous bad life. Indeed, he went to the woman who resided immediately below, and who kept the key of the Mission-room, and said, "Mary, what did ye tell Vasey all about us for? Ye made us feel ashamed."

The whole of the sixteen were brought to their knees, and many of them wept like little children.

Harry was in great distress for some time, and did not find true peace until Christmas, 1866, when a public tea-meeting was held in the Mission-room.

From that meeting he went home, and knelt down at the same window out of which he had previously jumped when drunk, and kneeling there, in fervent prayer, found the pearl of great price.

So popular had Mr. Vasey become in the neighbourhood of the Mission, that the worst characters in Newcastle would often inquire of such as Harry, "*Well, let's know when Vasey preaches next; we'll all come, he's such a good fellow.*"

At the last sacramental service conducted by Mr. Vasey, a few good-hearted fellows got round him as he reclined against the Communion rail, when he addressed them thus :—

"Don't forget to pray for me, lads, for I am but a poor tool without God."

On a week night, when planned to preach, so very few members were present, that he said to those who did come, "This will never do;" and they all turned out, paraded Sandgate, and Mr. Vasey preached in the open air, from the text, "Prepare to meet thy God."

Again, Mr. Vasey often visited the homes of the destitute in and about Sandgate, and was the direct instrument in more than one case of effecting legal matrimonial unions between persons who had previously lived in adultery.

He also publicly baptized adults, both male and female, who, up to the age of twenty-five years, had not been so baptized.

One case may be cited :—

Harry Farrier, having become a member at the Swirle, Mr. Vasey said to him, "Now, we must have you baptized."

The time was fixed, and on a Sunday morning, at Clarence-street, Mr. Vasey himself performed the ceremony, and, what is most interesting, Mr. Vasey on the Tuesday evening before when he was planned at Clarence-street, came an hour earlier, and instructed Harry in the matter, and especially as to the meaning of the answers he should give on the Sunday following.

One of the most remarkable services held at the Swirle Mission, was on the day of the great champion boat-race, May 6th, 1867. The large room was well filled, and Mr. Vasey, accompanied by Mr. P. McKenzie, discoursed to the people. Two boat rowers were present, Mr. Teesdale Wilson and Robert Gibson, both prominent characters in the aquatic world. In the evening another service was held, when Rev. Joseph Dawson preached to a very large congregation, and the result of that day's services was the conversion of several souls.

When the corporation gave notice for terminating the tenancy of the mission room, for the purpose of pulling the same down for public improvements, Mr. Vasey requested that a stick, or a chair, or some other appropriate emblem, might be made for him out of the old timbers.

A Lifeboat was afterwards made, and presented with a little ceremony, at the close of one of the week night services, along with a wonderfully correct and clever oil-painting of the interior of the room, executed and neatly framed by a local artist. In accepting them, Mr. Vasey said, "I shall put them into my study, and as long as I live I will look upon them as referring to the happiest days of my life, and associated with the time when the power of God was so manifested in the salvation of lost and perishing souls."

The success of the Swirle Mission was one among other things which made the three years Mr. Vasey spent at Newcastle, perhaps, the happiest and most successful of his life.

CHAPTER XIII.

CLOSE OF LABOURS AND OF LIFE.

THE short distance between Newcastle and Sunderland made the removal less a source of dread than usual. Though his wife's state of health was never allowed to influence Mr. Vasey in the choice or rejection of a circuit (and if the Conference appointment had been to one far remote he would cheerfully have made his plans accordingly); yet he was thankful to be spared the increased anxiety which such a designation would have devolved upon him.

On their arrival at their new habitation, the family found it, though unpretentious, yet affording facilities for much domestic comfort.

In Sunderland, indeed, the home circle seemed to be drawn closer together, and hence the happiness and enjoyment of the head as well as of each member of it, was greatly augmented.

This effect seemed the commencement of innumerable Providential arrangements, which lightened to the utmost possible extent the weight of that blow, the approaching shadow of which terminated Mr. Vasey's connection with Sunderland. When he attended the "welcome tea" the prospect was bright, and apparently extended some distance into the future. This tea meeting seems to be a local institution, and is held to offer kindly greetings to newly arrived ministers. By this means a stranger is able to make an early and extensive, if not a very intimate acquaintance with his colleagues and people.

At the Sans-street gathering held in September, 1869, Mr. Vasey met the Revs. P. Mackenzie and J. Dawson,

who were to work with him during his remaining term of active labour. Mr. Dawson says :—

My closest acquaintance with Mr. Vasey dates from the period when I was associated with him as his junior colleague in the Sunderland Sans-street Circuit, though for some years previously I had known him, more or less intimately, as the Chairman of the Newcastle District. As a man, a Christian, and a Minister, I admired and esteemed him very much, and am glad to have this opportunity of recording a few reminiscences of his character and conduct. One of the things about him that impressed me much was the cheerfulness and simplicity of his Christian deportment. Except when suffering, as he sometimes did, from severe depression of spirits, he was a man of a very cheerful temper. Possessing a rich supply of wit and humour, the gleamings from which were keen and sparkling, he would often enliven the dry routine of business by his pleasantry, and in the social circle few could be more entertaining and agreeable. A well-furnished mind, a ready utterance, and a never-failing store of genial good-nature made him a very pleasant companion and guest. His gaiety was often like that of a happy child. I remember accompanying him one bright day to a country village, where he had to preach, and as we walked through the fields, he took off his hat and startled with it some horses that were idly grazing close at hand, and then ran scampering after them, like a schoolboy out for a holiday. Fond of the society of young people, he entered heartily into their enjoyments, and seemed delighted to be able to add in any way to their happiness. I daresay his own children will not soon forget the interest and pleasure which, only a few months before his death, he took in the family Christmas-tree. And yet his cheerfulness never verged on frivolity, and his humour never approached in the slightest degree that empty badinage which, in too many cases, is accounted wit. Though very methodical in his habits, his bearing was free and unstudied, and at the furthest possible remove from frigidness and affectation. There was much of Jesus in him, but not an atom of the Pharisee. It was impossible to doubt his goodness, and yet his own lips never proclaimed it. You might feel when near him that you were in the presence of one who towered above you in spiritual stature, but there was nothing in his manner that seemed to hint offensively—"I am holier than thou." The man was never lost in the saint, nor the saint in the man. He was evidently a citizen of heaven, but that did not destroy his interest in the affairs of earth. He could talk on theology and the spiritual life, and his thoughts on such subjects were not soon to be forgotten; but he could also converse with a ready intelligence on the current topics of the day, political, social, or scientific. He wore his saintliness not as the monk wears his cowl, but as the tree wears its leaves; it was not his professional garb, but the natural outgrowth of his soul. To those who saw him only occasionally he may have sometimes appeared a little austere, but by those who knew him best he was regarded, not as the stern ecclesiastic, exacting and unsympathising, but as the childlike man, full of strength and kindliness; as the brother, ever

ready to lend a helping hand to those who struggled with him up the steep ascent of life.

Another thing that deserves special mention was his self-sacrificing spirit, as evidenced in his earnest labour for the salvation of souls. Few men have been more thoroughly devoted to their work. In his last circuit, though burdened with the cares of the Newcastle district, he would never take a single appointment less than his colleagues, nor delegate to them a duty which he thought belonged properly to himself, and often did he go to preach when many, even brave and conscientious men, would have felt themselves justified in resting in bed. I well remember the sensation produced in the last District meeting but one which he attended, when in urging the brethren to strive to save sinners, he told us solemnly that he attributed much of his physical weakness and pain to the suffering he had gone through in travailing in birth for souls. Examining two candidates for ordination at the district meeting in Sunderland, he said to one of them, "Have you ever had any doubts about the doctrine of eternal punishment?" "No," answered the young man. Mr. Vasey paused, in deep emotion, and then said very solemnly, "*I have;* I have searched my Bible through and through to find a loophole of escape from the belief of that doctrine, but I have failed. To me it seems an awful thing that some of the people I preach to on the Sunday, may be in hell before the next week," and he bowed his head on the desk before him and wept, and there were few, if any, in the room who did not share his emotion. Not many men have had a more vivid sense of the worth and the peril of human souls, or have longed more ardently for their salvation. This was visible, not only in his preaching, but in his addresses in the Conference, in the District and Quarterly meetings, in social gatherings, and in meeting the classes. The address he gave his brethren when he first assumed the duties of chairman of the Newcastle district will not soon be forgotten by those who heard it. He told us, with tears, of his unworthiness and want of faith, of his passionate yearning for souls, and his resolve to expect their salvation in every service; and, as he went on, his emotion increased, and spread from one to another, until all were bowed in sorrow and humiliation before God.

From that District meeting the brethren returned to their respective circuits, resolved on a re-consecration of themselves to Christ's service, and when the year had rolled away and the returns of numbers were made up, it was found that, so far as the increase of its members was concerned, the Newcastle District stood at the head of the Connexion. The same soul-saving element pervaded his prayers, and his were prayers that did not lack power and success. When the large increase to which I have just referred took place, there was one circuit in the District, which seemed to have no cause for rejoicing, for its numbers were less instead of more. Mr. Vasey took the circuit under the wing of his especial prayer, and requested the other ministers to do the same, and what was the result? Why in about two years there had been a revival at every place excepting one in that circuit, and its increase was the largest in the district. It was a common thing for Mr. Vasey to pray for all the Ministers in his District by name, and

the assurance that he did so was a source of strength and consolation to many of them. One Saturday evening he felt unusual liberty and power in this exercise. His soul was drawn out in earnest intercession. That same evening one of the brethren, many miles away, felt such a blessed influence resting on his spirit that he said to his wife, "My dear, I think some one must be praying for me." And another brother told me some months afterwards that the Sabbath which succeeded the Chairman's special prayer, marked a new era in his ministerial history, that souls were converted under his preaching that day, a thing he had not seen for some time, and that the same sort of success had followed his efforts more or less ever since. Our dear and honoured friend has been lifted to a higher sphere, and our prayers must be that God may raise up many more of this brave and self-sacrificing spirit, who will strive earnestly to help the Redeemer in His glorious work of saving the world.

At the close of this year the Education question became very prominent; and if on this question Mr. Vasey was "the soldier tired of war's alarms" who "scorns the clang of hostile arms," yet it was true of him that "if again the trumpet sounds, he dares again the field," and he set himself to work to influence public opinion and guide it in the right direction. We have mentioned the meeting in Newcastle, which he had attended in November of this year; and he continued, in Sunderland, to show his deep interest in the subject. He was included in a town committee nominated to consider the question, and took an active part in its debates; addressed a public meeting in Sans-street Chapel; and when the Committee brought its rival resolutions before a crowded meeting in the largest theatre in Sunderland, he argued the point allotted to him ably and convincingly; and he finally organised Wesleyan action at the School Board election.

He was twitted at this time, as afterwards, with his association with Roman Catholics; but what some people thought of his Protestantism may be inferred from the fact that immediately after the public efforts just mentioned he was invited to deliver three lectures to the Protestant Young Men's Association, and was very pleased to do so. The lectures were on "Purgatory," "Penance," "Confession," "Absolution," and were

models of comprehensiveness and exactness. And as the testimony of enemies may sometimes be of more value than that of friends, we may mention that the writer of these pages has been assured that satisfaction was openly expressed by a certain section of the Roman Catholics on hearing of Mr. Vasey's death.

These, however, were not the only public efforts he felt it his duty to put forth at this crisis; he felt a keener concern about the direction which Connexional action would take, and was troubled to see a tendency to reverse past policy and practice, and he spoke in the meetings of the Committees with energy proportioned to his felt importance of the occasion. We add a verbatim report of the greater part of a speech delivered at the meeting of the united Committees on Education, held at the Centenary Hall, London, on Tuesday, November 30th, 1869, and the following days.

MR. PRESIDENT—I confess myself to be very much startled and surprised by the conversation of yesterday. I left home on Monday, and travelled all night in order to get here in time for the opening of this debate, but the excitement and the surprise occasioned to me by the speeches of yesterday, kept me pacing the floor of my room until two o'clock this morning.

I have been reviewing the course of our Educational movement. During the last twenty-five years, I have traversed almost every district in England, endeavouring to propagate the principles of education as laid down by our Conference from year to year, and I think I have been pretty well conversant with the working of our system during the whole of that period. I cannot say that I feel that same perplexity that Mr. ——— has admitted. I feel exceedingly firm, and clear, and certain in the principles that I have hitherto adopted and espoused on this point; and I see clearly that whatever may happen in the ordinations of Providence, we have a set of principles that will carry us through every difficulty. I also think that I see my way clearly to the maintenance of those principles, allowing of course for such adaptations in their administration as may be deemed necessary, or advisable. I was very much surprised last night to hear a denial given to that fundamental principle, that the Christian Church as such is under obligation to instruct the masses of the people. We have been at a great expenditure in the creation of our educational institutions. We have spent about a million of money during the last twenty-five years on our schools; and I seem to think that if the principles which are now in vogue, should come into force amongst us, all that money must have been wasted. But I feel certain that we have been acting upon right principles; they are New Testament principles. Christ's command was,

"Go and baptize all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." . . . When our Lord said suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, He intended that it should be the function of the Church to take hold of little children to the end of time, and instruct them in whatever was necessary to give them an intelligent perception of His mediatorial work. So at least it was understood by the early Christian Church. Hence the order of "Catechists" arose. We see a further development of the same general principle in subsequent ages. We find that all the great educational foundations have been laid by the Christian Church, and have been formed in connection with religious influence. In connection with our present system, we have Government grants. The Government made its first grants for education in 1839. There was a felt want of education, and the Government resolved to give money to any one who would undertake to impart it. It found two parties ready to hand—the National Society, and the British and Foreign School Society. These were the only two parties who were prepared to do the work, the idea being that the Government grant being equally divided, was to be equally apportioned to the Established Church and the Dissenters. That was the agency which the Government found already existing and ready to its hand; and that was the only agency, for there had been no other associations formed in this country for the purpose of spreading education throughout the land. So that up to this time the country has been shut up to the agency of the Christian bodies; and it has had nothing else for the last thirty years. Now I should like that this fact should be fairly looked at, for it was said last night that the denominational system was a failure. But if it has failed to do all, it has not failed to do a great deal, and I think that the patient, self-sacrificing, self-denying labours of the educating bodies of this country which are mainly connected with the Christian Church should be taken into consideration by the people of this country before any large sweeping measure is passed. What have these educating religious bodies done towards public education? They have spent some millions of money; they have raised a very large annual revenue, partly by subscriptions and collections; they have got a large number of persons to come to school under some form of *régime* or other; and I don't think that there is a great deal of importance to be attached to the different degrees of education. I am of opinion that *a dame school* is a very good thing. I remember with very great respect the old lady who used to sit in the chair at the head of our establishment, and the influence she exerted over us. When that good old woman put on her spectacles, and took up her Bible to read to us she exerted a very good civilising influence over us indeed. I believe that, inferior as it may be, the education which is given in these private schools is not to be despised. Of course if you mean to bring the masses of the country under a state of high cultivation, such agencies as these will not answer your purpose; but they do to some extent meet a want; and particularly now, when by recent Government arrangements we are reduced to the miserable maximum of education consisting of reading, writing, and arithmatic, that being the only instruction for which the Government will pay.

The difference between these private schools, and national schools for which no higher curriculum is provided than that, cannot be very great. These religious bodies have not only provided schools, they have got a great many children into the schools; and my belief is that in doing this they have done a work which no other public body could have done; for, after all, the great difficulty is not to provide education, but to get the people to accept it. The greatest difficulty has been to induce the parents to send their children to school. That difficulty has been overcome by the religious bodies. But they have done more than that. They have got the parents to *pay* for the instruction which their children have received which is another important thing; and we are now training up the *third generation* of these children.

And then, with regard to *Teachers*, I must say that I consider it to be one of the greatest benefits ever conferred upon this country that a staff of teachers, numbering perhaps not less than 20,000, should have been created, all of good moral character, and as much superior to the children they have to teach, in their social position, as the village clergyman is to the small tradesman. These 20,000 teachers constitute a most valuable class of persons—a class which never existed before, drawn from and exerting a powerful influence upon the middle-class people upon whom the safety of this country depends; for the safety of this country does not depend upon the outcasts.

The religious bodies, then, have done all this: they have built schools and colleges; they have raised up a class of duly qualified teachers, and they have succeeded in getting the parents, not only to accept instruction for their children, but to pay for it. As to the residuum, whether larger or smaller, it should be remembered that there will be very many children whom you never will get into your schools. However, you may reckon the number of children from five to thirteen: you must make large deductions for young persons who will be required at home. You must allow a mother to keep her eldest girl till she is thirteen. You must allow a workman to have his meals carried to him by certain members of his family, &c. Well, now, seeing that all this has been done, I hope it will be admitted that, up to this time, the religious bodies of the country have rendered admirable service. As to teachers, I ask you, where else could you have found 20,000 men and women so suitable, so well fitted for their work as you have obtained from these religious bodies? You never have found suitable teachers yet; and you never will find them anywhere than in the Christian Church. Who else will sympathise with the souls of the younger population, and exercise themselves in good works? Therefore, looking to the religious bodies as the only source from whence you can derive your supply of adequate teachers, how can you dispense with their services in this respect?

I picture to myself the effect that may be produced by the action of the Birmingham League. What class of teachers are you likely to get if their programme be carried out? My belief is that the National Schools would soon be taught by an inferior class of men—men who have broken down through evil habits, or through misfortune—men of good education, it may be, but who have failed in practical life. You will have such people as these applying to your

local boards. They will come with their testimonials and College Certificates; and I am afraid you will get back to the state out of which we have been slowly emerging for the last thirty years. How are you to prevent it? You may train as many teachers as you like, but where is your guarantee that your trained teachers will be employed? If it is to depend upon the caprice of a board whether a man shall be employed or not, is it in the nature of things to be expected that people can be induced to commit themselves to a long course of training, first as pupil teachers, and then as students, in the merest chance that some time or other they may find employment by the vote of some local board? It has been said that the religious bodies have not done all the work that needs to be done. They have done much, but why have they not done more? Nothing has given me more grief than the action of Mr. Lowe—a man with a head but without a heart—a man who has no sympathies with the working classes of this country, and whose appointment to office I regard as one of the greatest misfortunes that has befallen the children of this country. The influence of the Revised Code has shaken to a degree beyond what anyone can conceive, the confidence of school managers and teachers; and, but for that, we should have seen greater educational results. Another reason why the religious bodies are not doing more is to be found in the obstructive action of the committee of Council, in adopting those miserable regulations by which we are restricted from building a school larger than our own denominational influence requires. Why should not we, as Methodists, be at liberty to go and build a school in any neglected district, irrespective of the number of Methodists who may be resident there? Seeing that such restrictions as these are put upon us, no one has a right to complain that the religious denominations have not done more than they have towards meeting the educational necessities of the land.

It has been said that the Clergy are animated by sectarian motives, and that their object is to build up Church influence. I must say that I should have liked to have seen a grain more of charity in the strictures that have been passed in these respects. For my part, I am not so much afraid of the action of the High Church party in our day-schools as some people are. I believe that the Clergy are not able to indoctrinate the minds of the children with their peculiar views. A great deal of the error which they wish to teach is put into such a form that it is not accessible to the juvenile mind. The children lie below the fire, and they escape it. I went down to —— once. Mr. ——, the banker there, was the chief supporter of a very effective day-school in that town. The wife of Mr. —— was a High Church lady, and she had a particularly strong prejudice against Methodism. I held a long conversation with her on the subject of day-school instruction. After I had put a few points to her rather strongly, she admitted to me that the attempts which had been made to indoctrinate the children of the school referred to into their peculiar dogmas had miserably failed. I said, "How could you expect anything else than failure? You begin by teaching those children the Church Catechism, which contains a downright lie at the very beginning. The children contradict you flatly. How can you expect them to believe anything else you say, when on the

only point on which you are open to any kind of check they find you wrong?" But, granting that there are many schools in which there is a strong clerical and proselytising influence, are we, for the sake of those schools to alter our whole system? When I look at all these things together, I tell you plainly that rather than shut up the poor children of this country to mere secular instruction, I will accept High Church teaching—nay, more, I will accept Roman Catholic teaching in these schools. (Cries of "No, no," and "Hear, hear.") Let us go into this question. What is the theological teaching, or what are the dogmas taught in High Church schools and Roman Catholic schools? Are they not in the main such dogmas as we ourselves would teach, and which form the basis of a proper national education? To begin with, *There is the dogma of a Creator.* Are we not all agreed about that? I should like to ask whether Professor Huxley is prepared to tell any child who made him? The only answer which *he* would be prepared to give, would be—"Protoplasm!" Take another thing advanced. The late President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (Mr. Grove), wrote a work on the correllation of forces, in which he says that whilst he himself believes in an antecedent to all force, he does not think it is capable of being proved. "Nature does not reveal a first cause." Of course it does not. Nature only reveals the seed and the tree. Where the seed came from, nature does not teach. You must go to the Bible for that. Again: the Roman Catholics teach that *there is a moral Governor,* that is a doctrine taught in all schools of religious bodies, and it is something which every child ought to know. What is he to do if there be no moral Governor? Again, we are all agreed on *the doctrine of Retribution.* On this subject I will quote Lord John Russell. In the great debate on Mr. Fox's Bill, he said, "You want, and the Government wants, an education that will restrain pride, and create a moral feeling, and inculcate moral duties." Now, why should a teacher in one of these schools be prevented from saying to a child, "My child, your everlasting welfare depends upon this?" It is very well-known that I am a strong Protestant, in fact, an Orangeman. Nevertheless, when the Earl of Arundel said, the other day, "I don't appear here as a Roman Catholic, I appear here on the common ground of Christianity, and I appeal to you as Christians, that you will not divorce the religious element from the education of the country," I felt a brotherly feeling towards him. You perceive I am taking the worst view of the question before us, and I say that even in the case of Roman Catholic schools there are three things taught there which we have in common. But further: I believe we are all agreed that when a man can't get on by his own strength when he is struggling to do right, *he can get help from heaven.* Well now, the Roman Catholic teaches that also. He teaches a child to pray. If you go farther than that, of course I part company with the Roman Catholic. I am mentioning those points on which we are agreed. On this subject of religious instruction I speak feelingly. When I was a boy it was of very little consequence what my tutors and governors taught me, unless they taught me to govern my passions. The extent to which

I was carried away with ungovernable passion was positively terrifying. I tremble now when I think of it. I have been in danger of killing boys in my fury many a time. On one occasion I did actually run a dagger (wooden) into a boy who had offended me. The reaction which I experienced from those storms of passion was something tremendous. I felt as if the devil would take me away body and soul together. What did I want? I didn't want reading, writing, and arithmetic, I wanted to know that there was a power above my humble efforts, and that I could find that help in Christ. I knew a child who had two drunken parents. Her father and mother drank the money that she should have had to pay for her instruction at school. One Monday morning, on being told that she could not go to school because her parents had no money, she broke out into a transport of grief, and said, "If I may not go into the school, you cannot prevent me from going to the school, and putting my ear to the door, so that I may hear the master pray!" I ask, Will you prevent a child in such a school as that from climbing up heavenward by the prayers of a godly teacher? What is that child to do if it suffers from the neglect of its father and mother, and yet is not allowed to go to a godly teacher who will sympathise with and pray for it? I repeat it, if I am driven to the alternative of sending a child to a Roman Catholic or a secular school, I wouldn't hesitate a minute; I should prefer the first to a bare, dry, miserable system of secular education, which would be made obligatory upon the children of the working classes, while it would not be obligatory upon the children of the higher classes.

What then ought this committee to recommend? I would say: Lay it down as a postulate that no system of national education can answer the purpose intended by it, unless it combines the elements of secular and moral training, and it must be an integral part of education to teach the children their duty to God and their neighbour. I hope that this committee will come to that conclusion. I think that a great deal depends upon the position that the Methodists take on this point. My anxiety on this subject has become so intense as to be almost overpowering. I believe that the Methodist people have this question almost entirely in their hands. And where will you find such teaching as that which we have in our own schools? Bad as we Methodists are, there is not another educating body in the country that has so much religion in it, so much felt, experimental, vital godliness. I speak from knowledge—from my knowledge of the teachers, who are an honour to us—who would be an honour to any community, and a blessing to the nation at large. I speak of the schools I have myself visited, and of the moralising effects that have come under my own observation over a large extent of country—and I say that the educational operations of the Methodist body at this day, if not perfect, are the nearest approach to perfection on the face of the earth. That is my firm belief, and I hope my brethren will pause before they wantonly sacrifice it, or allow it to be shunted out of the way. If it is to be taken away from us by violence, so be it; but let us sink with the ship rather than desert it. Can we not be agreed to lay down this postulate, that any system of education that may be adopted must include the moral training of the children, and

must be based upon religion? I hope we may go as far as that. And I would also say that the religious bodies have done much and are worthy of commendation for it. Can we not also agree in this, that there is still a large amount of educational destitution? Let us admit that. It is a fact which cannot be denied. We see it everywhere. Can we not also say that before other measures are tried we think it desirable to attempt some extension of the existing arrangement? Can we not go so far as to admit in substance some of these recommendations of the Manchester Union? Can we not then say (for that is a point that has not been mentioned) that for the Arab population of the streets, for the very scum of society amongst us, we hope the Government will devise some measures, by which their support can be provided for during the period of their education. I think we might all agree to suggestions such as these. But whatever you do, if you are going to deal with the Arabs of the street, don't offer them a merely secular education; I think it is a mockery to a poor child in the streets, to offer to teach him reading, writing, and arithmetic, and nothing more.

Writing of this occasion Mr. Vasey says: "This is 4.30 p.m., and I have just returned from dining at Mr. Nightingale's. Just before dinner I gave my deliverance, and for three-quarters of an hour, to a full house. What effect it produced I cannot yet tell, but I was complimented on all sides for it. I spoke throughout in great pain, which has not yet altogether subsided, though it is nearly three hours since. . . . My soul is happy and my body better, though my anxiety and excitement yesterday kept me walking the floor of my bedroom till two o'clock this morning. . . . ."

At the end of this month Mr. Vasey was again in the neighbourhood of London, assisting at the opening services of a new chapel at Watford. He seldom left his own circuit to assist in services elsewhere, without witnessing blessed effects of his labours, through the accompanying aid of the Holy Spirit, in the awakening and conversion of sinners, as well as in the edification of believers. His fervent zeal seemed to fire all with whom he came in contact, and upon himself the effect of these extra-parochial services was remarkable. If he had left home ill and depressed, he would return, even after hard duty, better both in health and spirits. And this he did to the last of his ministerial course. An extract from a letter while on the above-mentioned visit proves that

it was productive of the usual good results:—"I had a good day yesterday both times; took the texts I named to you, and had tolerable liberty in handling them. The congregation was large in the morning, and in the evening crowded. In the prayer-meeting afterwards, there was a large attendance, and we had not proceeded far before there was a break-down—three or four penitents came up to the communion rail, others fell down in their pews and began to cry for mercy, and I had enough to do to get round and talk to them all. Besides these, there were a number of members who came forward to acknowledge their unfaithfulness, to renew their vows of dedication to God, and to seek a richer baptism of the Spirit. I could scarcely get away at eleven o'clock, and left several in the Chapel continuing in prayer. It was, indeed, a blessed time, and I feel the exhilarating effects of it to-day. I hope they have got a good start; at any rate, I am quite satisfied that I came to Watford."

We give the two following letters, written about this period, as further illustrating Mr. Vasey's interest in young people, and as expressing his views of the Class Meeting:—

Sunderland Sept. 16th, 1869.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—

You will think me very dilatory in replying to your letter, and I am myself surprised to find that nearly a month has passed since I received it, but I assure you that the delay has been owing to press of business, bustle, and excitement, which has left me very little leisure. If, indeed, yours had been a mere business letter, I should have spared a few minutes to throw off a hasty reply, but I could not treat such a communication in a hasty and superficial manner, and therefore take one of the very first opportunities which has occurred of quiet leisure in my new study to reply to it. I cannot describe the pleasure your letter gave me, and should be glad to receive one like it every day. It shows what I am too prone to overlook and under value,—how much good may be done of which we know nothing. You have, then, given your heart to God! Happy choice! Wise decision! May you never swerve from it, but adhere to it for the rest of your life! I rejoice greatly with you over this change, which nothing less than the Almighty power of God could have wrought; and I have entire confidence in the sufficiency of the same power to keep you faithful unto death. At the same time, I feel anxious about you, that you should hold fast, and go on in the ways of God. I do not gather from your note that you have given your hand to the people

of God. If not, I would strongly advise you to do so, both with a view to keep the grace you already enjoy, and to obtain more. From what you say I infer that you have not yet gone to a class-meeting, as you do not appear to have yet got over the difficulty of speaking to others about your religious feelings. But I am sure you will find, if you try, that expressing your feelings to others will be a means of increasing your own religious consciousness, and of doing good to others. If you knew the pleasure that your *written* communication gave to me, you could infer better what comfort the *spoken* testimony would convey to others. Besides, in your position the open profession of religion would be a great safeguard and protection to you. But I must not enlarge upon this, as it may turn out to have been altogether unnecessary. Notwithstanding, if you have any difficulty on this, or on any other religious subject, I shall be very glad to hear from you, and will promise you in future (D.V.) to be more prompt in my reply. Meanwhile, let me earnestly exhort you to do all the good you can in your own circle. I cannot but think that there is a fine opportunity for usefulness amongst some of your young friends, which I hope you will do your best to improve. Believe me,

Your faithful friend,

THOMAS VASEY.

Sunderland, December 29th, 1869.

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND.

I was pleased to hear from you again, and according to my promise, will not allow so long an interval to occur again between your letter and my reply. I only returned from London on the 24th inst., and have been very busy since, or I would have written sooner. I think that with respect to speaking in class, it is generally easy enough to do if we have got anything to say; that is, if our hearts are richly charged with the love of God, and if we are prepared, out of our experience, to furnish fresh proofs of the goodness and faithfulness of our Covenant God. To speak when under the influence of such feelings is a real *pleasure*, and at all times, and in every variety of frame or feeling, a positive *duty*.

It is only by this means that the people can get to know what a vital reality religion is—a thing about which most people are in utter ignorance—and such persons are often stimulated to seek it upon such a discovery. It is often a great comfort to doubting Christians to hear cheerful testimonies as to the fulfilment of God's promises, answers to prayers, &c. &c. One thing that will greatly help you, if you have not already adopted the practice, is to keep a diary, or daily record of your religious feelings; this would give you both a clear perception of your own religious state, and greater facility of expression when you speak. And another thing that would help you greatly, and perhaps, by the blessing of God, prove very useful to others, is writing religious letters to your friends; such letters, which can be read and pondered in secret, often do more than even speaking, to bring others to religious decision. I shall hope for the pleasure of seeing you, if you should be at home, on this day fortnight, and meanwhile am,

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS VASEY.

During the winter months Mr. Vasey seldom left home, but devoted himself unsparingly to the duties of his circuit. Though still subject to the spasmodic attacks in the chest, these were neither so severe nor frequent as during the three preceding winters; so that he was able to go in and out among the people, doing an amount of pastoral visitation for which he had not had opportunity for some time past. Mr. Vasey's visits were paid very impartially; in his conversation with the poorer members, he made them feel thoroughly at home with him, and was successful in winning their confidence through the interest he manifested in their concerns. Nor was his sympathy limited to words; his purse was ever open, and sometimes emptied in response to a tale of want and suffering; and though frequently imposed upon, this did not deter him from continuing to dispense his charities to the utmost extent of his means.

He often visited the Sunday and day-schools; it had long been Mr. Vasey's practice after dining with a family on Sunday, to get some one to accompany him to the nearest Sunday-school; and he was always ready to relieve whoever was on duty, though he enjoyed taking them by surprise, quietly stepping inside the door, and listening to what was going on.

With regard to the day-schools, the entries in his pocket book indicate the not infrequency of his visits to them.

We may mention, also, the warm interest Mr. Vasey displayed in the German mission in Sunderland, and the pains he bestowed to promote its extension by every means in his power.

The advent of spring brought heavy Deputation work, which was supplemented by his attendance at the May meetings in London, in which he was invited to take a part. Writing in the midst of Deputation engagements, he says:—"I feel much being so long away from my circuit, and also the want of you very much, though I am only a teaze and a plague to you when I am at home. I hope God will help me in London, for I feel less con-

fidence than ever in myself, and my dependence upon Divine aid is stronger than ever."

On this visit, he was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson, at Gunnersbury, with whom he found refreshment and happiness, when the duties of the day were over. On Sunday, May 1st, he preached in the morning at City-road, and in the evening at Lambeth, of which latter service he writes:—"I got special help from God in the chapel with the "Rent Veil;" had a large attendance in the prayer-meeting, and several penitents; one of whom found peace; did not get away till nearly ten o'clock."

Mr. Vasey felt with regard to the Exeter Hall meeting that the occasion called for some special effort, and had accordingly given both time and labour upon the preparation of it. The result was a speech full of earnest thought, and new and grand ideas, the principal points of which he rehearsed in the hearing of his wife, to her great delight, before leaving home. Great, however, was the disappointment of the family circle, when he wrote, saying that as he had the speech before the collection, and the people were exhausted, ere he was called upon to speak, he thought he should best promote the interest of the cause, by sacrificing the speech he had prepared with such care, and giving a few simple and earnest thoughts instead.

In the same letter he says, "I have been much reminded of our early married life and its associations by this visit, and could not resist the temptation of trotting you out before the meeting in Exeter Hall."

The sacrifice of this speech was only one among many striking instances which might be adduced of Mr. Vasey's self-abnegation, and was the result of deliberation and not of recklessness. When he gave himself up to his Divine Master, he did not withhold his reputation, and this was freely sacrificed when occasion required.

On May 3rd Mr. Vasey attended the Home Missionary Meeting. Of this he says:—

The chairman, Mr. Atkinson, made a very good speech to start with; Mr. Prest gave a verbal report of forty minutes, which was

very good; the President of the Conference followed in his happiest strain. Afterwards Richard Hardy, of Aldershot, who gave a very telling account of the state of religion in the army; then Mr. McAulay, who gave us the East of London, and carried the meeting with him. Then came Samuel Coley, who out of deference to me spoke only a few minutes, and retired. Next came Mr. Cox, of China, for a short time; then, at five minutes to nine, your humble servant. Spoke about forty minutes without pain or embarrassment of any kind, and I trust with Divine unction, and Mr. —— told me, when I sat down, that it was worth my while to have come to London, if only to deliver that speech. So you see, my darling, that I get helped through from above somehow or other.

He returned home only to journey again to London to be present at the deliberations of the Education Committee at the Mission House, held on May 10th.

He writes:—

We have had some very animating discussions to-day, and have spent nearly four hours in a discussion upon a point upon which we have at last decided not to vote. We are now in for a debate on the "Conscience Clause," and the Irish school system, and are to close at half-past six o'clock. . . . I find that my services last week have given great satisfaction, and that I am considered safe for the Chair. I find that the question of physical competence is considered as practically settled by my exertions in public last week.

I continue to receive promises of support, and to learn that the general expectation is in my favour. Mr. —— told me that as far as he had heard, this was the general idea, and Mr. —— assured me with great feeling of his vote. I mention these things because I know you will feel interested in all that relates to this subject, and that our children also are anxious upon it; but as for myself, I hold my mind as far as possible in an even balance, prepared for either issue.

On Monday, June 13th, at Brunswick Chapel, Newcastle, Mr. Vasey, by request, endeavoured to improve the death of the Rev. J. P. Haswell, his text being, "Ye are come . . . to the spirits of just men made perfect." As a rule, Mr. Vasey disliked preaching funeral sermons, but he felt that now he had a worthy subject, and the large chapel (quite crowded) showed how many more there were who appreciated the genuine character of "father" Haswell.

He proceeded to Burslem at the usual time for the ministerial gathering in more vigorous health than he had enjoyed for some years, and feeling there was a great probability of his being elected President, this idea

had been so often presented to him by his friends, that he had become familiar with it, and had gradually lost his sense of repugnance to it. Indeed, as the time drew nigh, he seemed to hope that it might be so; when we say hoped, we feel that we must have failed wofully to portray his character if this expression is at all misunderstood. No man would have appreciated more, or taken greater delight in the honour, as a mark of the confidence of his brethren than he, but here his view of the *honour* was bounded. He took pleasure in the thought of occupying the position mainly because of the extended opportunities which the power and prestige of the Presidency would afford him in carrying out his all-absorbing work of soul-saving. His great ambition was to be made a blessing to the entire Connexion.

On saying good-bye to his wife, he remarked to her playfully, "I think, my darling, as you cannot be present to share in your husband's honour you must wear a circlet of evergreens in honour of the event."

The result was a disappointment, and the occasion of temptation. But in proportion to the purity of his aims and his simple trust in the wisdom of God, was the readiness with which he overcame both. This will be manifest in the course of his Conference correspondence.

Burslem, Wednesday.—Arrived here at 6 p.m., and like my quarters very much. The house is high, and it is down-hill all the way to the chapel, about 10 minutes' walk. . . . The town is much better than I expected to find it, but full of factories, collieries, and iron-stone mines. I have enjoyed my journey, feel very well, and in good trim for work. . . .

July 18th.—We have been hard at work to-day with stationing business, and only finished at 1 p.m. Had a very calm and happy day on Sunday. Heard Dr. O. in the morning from "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up." In the afternoon heard Mr. Bell of Oxford from the charge and promise of God to Joshua, and preached at night from the text in Acts—close attention—deep feeling—large attendance at prayer-meeting—well sustained—6 or 7 penitents—some very interesting cases, and an immense amount of good to society. One gentleman remarked that that single service was a recompense to them for having the Conference, and justified the experiment. Retired to rest tired, but very happy. You may lay aside all uneasiness and anxiety about my health, I have great reason to be thankful to God for His goodness to me, and can praise Him with all

my heart. Things are going on straight for the chair, and indeed the sight of it on Sunday struck me almost into a cold sweat when I thought how soon I might be in it. The great difficulty will be, I fear, not to get into it, but to occupy it worthily. But the Lord will provide, I trust, even for that. I rejoiced this morning when I awoke to find that I had got over a week out of the five—my home is very sweet to me, and so is the company of my dear wife, and I shall be thankful when I am restored to both; but the interval will be charged with heavy duties and responsibilities, which will probably make it appear to pass swiftly away. . . . I have just heard of another person who could not come forward last night, but has given her heart to God. I hope to hear of more such cases. I am getting many requests to preach sermons, on the understanding that I am to be President, but shall be obliged to decline them all till that event is settled.

July 22nd.—. . . . I still report well as to my health. We had a very enjoyable dinner party at Stoke yesterday, about twenty were present; and Mr. Brown, of Gateshead, gave us a very pious speech full of good feeling. This morning we had a very good sensible meeting on the Theological Institutions. There has been a good deal of talk about a preliminary Institution, or department in each Institution, for the purpose of giving the elements of a plain English education to such of the students as may be particularly defective, and not qualified either by taste or ability for classical teaching. This would enable us to take a class of men just for a year whose zeal, energy, and talents for general usefulness might otherwise be lost to the Connexion.

The election news is unimportant, but I have been applied to, this morning, for some particulars as to my history and antecedents, intended for publication along with the announcement of my election.

July 25th.—Went on Sunday morning to hear Mr. Prest, who gave us a very sound practical sermon, the congregation good and attentive. In the afternoon Tom and I went into some neighbouring cottages, distributed tracts, talked to the people and invited them to an outdoor service at 3, to which they came in good numbers. We got the children of a neighbouring Sunday-school and sang up and down the road, and I had a very good time in preaching from "Seek ye the Lord." Went off after tea to Stoke with Tom in company, found a chapel full of people; preached with great liberty from the "Spirit and Bride." Had a large attendance at the prayer-meeting, and three penitents, all of whom found peace. The people seemed delighted and almost pulled my hand off in shaking hands. . . . We have not had much of interest this morning until the very last when —— ventured upon a nomination for the chair in which he narrowed the issue to two brethren who, as he said, had lost their hair in the service of the Connexion, *and hinted that they had better not increase the number of men on the platform.* What has grieved me most, is to find that —— is working against me with all his might, and has actually gone as far as to say, that I am liable to a charge of breach of discipline, for attending a minor district meeting out of my district, and to censure for not acting with sufficient vigour in B——'s case. . . . I think things look worse than they did for my chance.

July 26th.—When you get this we shall be meeting for the de-

struggle, and I know I shall have your prayers, that I may be prepared for either issue. The fact is, that matters are getting very exciting, and I am getting rather shaky. . . .

July 27th.—Many thanks for your sweet letter received this morning. It helped to calm my trepidation and to strengthen my faith. My mind is kept in peace and patience. We are now busy with the elections into the legal hundred. Election for President going on 12.30. I have lost the day. . . . James 16, Haydon 17, Wiseman 25, Vasey 128, Farrar 173. . . .

I shall endeavour to throw myself into my circuit work, and to get the District raised to a better degree of prosperity. I have resolved to stay in to-night and talk matters over with the Lord. I believe that good will come out of this, and am settling down into a very contented state of mind. I hope, my dear wife, you will not be too much disappointed with the result of the voting to-day. I shall be glad for another year to enjoy more of your company at home, and if I am only blessed and made useful in my own neighbourhood, shall be abundantly satisfied. I think we shall plan another open-air service for next Sunday, as I shall not have to preach in the evening. I can afford to take a little more Sunday work, now that I am free from the duties of the chair, and shall be glad to do so. I wish we could have half-an-hour's talk together this afternoon, but we can meet at the Throne of Grace.

July 28th.—Many thanks for your letter received this morning. I waited for it with much eagerness, as I was anxious to know how you had settled down, upon mature consideration of the circumstances. It has been a great alleviation of our mutual sorrows and cares that we have been enabled to cast our burdens upon the Lord —to submit heartily and implicitly to His will, and to trust Him for His grace. This is the way to real and unchanging happiness in this state of trial. We shall be helpers of each other's faith and joy in the future, I trust, as we have been in the past.

July 29th.—We have had a pretty good Conference to-day, the best part of it being the address (an hour in length) of the American Bishop, which was exactly in harmony with my general views on Methodism, and, in many parts, was just what I should have said myself if I had been in the chair. I went on to the platform to-day, and shook hands with Mr. Farrar, and expressed to him my best wishes for his health and success.

July 31st.—Had a good camp-meeting. The whole affair was very effective; the people were vastly pleased, and I trust some good was done. At night went down to Burslem chapel; place crowded; sermon by Dr. Foster, of America, from the first three verses of St. John's Gospel; very masterly; theological and philosophical; a great and unexpected treat. The people seemed to appreciate and feel it. The prayer-meeting was given into my hands; many of the preachers stayed; the body of the chapel was nearly filled, and, after a great deal of exhorting and persuading, we got about sixteen penitents up, and carried on the prayer-meeting till ten o'clock, when most of them had found peace. I went home, I assure you, in high spirits, and very thankful. Had a good night's rest, and feel no worse to-day.

During this Conference the munificent proposal of Sir Francis Lycett to give £50,000 towards chapel-building in London, if an equal amount should be contributed by friends throughout the Connexion, was considered; and the propriety of setting apart a minister to the office of Secretary to the Metropolitan Chapel Building Fund. On the question Mr. Vasey said—

"They were in the presence now of a very grave crisis. He thought that it was impossible to exaggerate the importance of the crisis before them. It was not that they had simply to do with a particular offer, it was impossible to tell what might be the effect upon other persons. Who could tell the amount of money that might be available for the cause of God if due encouragement were afforded to such a proposal as that? He did think that although he was strongly against effective men being taken out of the work of the ministry, they should be prepared to meet an emergency like that. Let them show some expansiveness, some power of adaptation, some power to get out of the ruts. They had been running in the same groove a long time, and if such an offer as that of Sir Francis Lycett did not jog them out of it, he did not know what would. He should propose that out of respect to that offer, and for the sake of the moral influences that might attend their action upon that case, and the unknown consequences in future years, they expressed their readiness to set apart at once a minister for that purpose. Why, the money which they had laid out on London chapels was paying a hundred per cent., and if they were not to be encouragingly affected by such figures as had been presented, he didn't know what they were good for. He hoped that the Conference really would show itself now to be friendly to all these kinds of modern movements—that they would depart from their ancient precedents. He should heartily support the proposition, and he hoped the Conference would go as one man into it, and meet the case by the appointment of one of its best men."

Before returning to his circuit, Mr. Vasey held successful services at Scarborough, and arriving at home set himself to carry out his determination to concentrate all his energies for the welfare of his circuit and district. Acting upon this resolve, he declined numerous applications for his services from places outside his district, only responding to those where help seemed greatly needed, and the prospect of usefulness very promising.

For several months his health continued more vigorous, and as opportunity offered, he conducted open air services.

On the last occasion of the kind in Sunderland, one Sunday afternoon, Mr. Vasey invited several local

preachers, etc., to join him on the grass plot in front of his own house. Here they sang a hymn, and then proceeded along the streets singing, to a corner of the Park —a great resort on Sunday—and with others addressed the people assembled.

The evening of the same day found him again in his own pulpit working as though it were the first service in which he had engaged that Sabbath-day. On such occasions the delight which he took in his employment, and the passionate yearning over the souls to whom he was preaching, seemed to bear him above the sense of fatigue and pain; and if, in response to his fervent appeals, sinners were brought to Jesus, thankful and happy he would return to his home, and he might be heard singing as he ascended the stairs to his wife's room; if, on the contrary, Mr. Vasey, after the toils of the Sabbath, did not see visible fruits, he would return proportionably depressed, and his supper being set before him, he would say, "I have earned no supper to-night. I am a poor useless tool. I have done no business to-day." Then would follow an anxious and often sleepless night.

But, whether discouraged or otherwise, he never failed to join with his family in singing; an employment which customarily occupied some hours of the Sabbath, during which particular hymns were sung in memory of the departed children of the circle, the "Te Deum" generally closing the whole.

As winter advanced, the people of Ryhope, one of the country places, generously proposed to forego the privilege of his services during the winter months, thinking he suffered injury by coming out to them. We do not find, however, that he availed himself of this offer; indeed, in the severest weather he often went about, as he described, as "brisk as a bee."

It was at Sunderland principally that his temperance principles were fully developed. His practice in this respect had always been an example of moderation, and he had felt quite able to speak on the temperance question to teetotal audiences, but during the last two or three

years of his life he was a teetotaler himself, thinking that the fact of his being so might be useful to others, and advance the cause of temperance at large. He could not be induced, even when his health seemed to demand it, to take anything alcoholic, and set at nought medical advice on the subject.

After Christmas, which was a very happy one at home, he began to droop physically. The depressed state of the circuit, spiritually and financially, bore upon his spirits.

To improve the former he spared no effort, and, early in 1871, he, with his colleagues, carried on a series of special services, when he seemed to out-do himself in the fervour and passion of his appeals, without any great results.

He also set on foot a scheme for the improvement of the Circuit financially. Nor did he neglect the interests of his District. We find him in March attending the Quarterly Meeting at Morpeth, though then far from well. From this place he wrote :—

I just write this scrap to say that I have got on very well thus far and have scarcely had any ache or pain whatever all day, so that you need be under no anxiety about me. Either I am a very queer fellow or else Providence helps me wonderfully, when I seem to be at the far end, as I seemed yesterday. . All glory be to God.

In this Spring he also gave his aid at Anniversary services at Bristol, Bradford, and other places, with his accustomed power and success.

During the next months Mr. Vasey's energies failed more rapidly. Frequent attacks of bronchitis consumed his remaining physical strength, whilst the burden of souls, which had from the commencement of his ministry pressed heavily upon him, and had from year to year increased in weight, seemed at length to crush him with its load. Yet, depressed though he was in body and mind, he could not be prevailed upon to refrain from efforts for which he was manifestly unequal. The absorption of his soul in the work to which he had devoted his life, appeared intensified as his bodily powers decreased. Neither personal sufferings nor weakness, neither family interests nor anything earthly, had power to divert him from his great business. His purity of

motive, oneness of aim, and transparency of life shone more and more brightly, and were reflected in all he said and did; and he remarked more than once: "I should not care if there was a window in my breast; anyone might know every thought of my heart." This was no idle or thoughtless expression, but the utterance of a soul in which the grace of God reigned and ruled. The most critical observer would have failed to detect in Mr. Vasey's walk and conversation at home or abroad the least thing contrary to the mind and law of Christ. The besetments which he had bewailed, and with which at the beginning of his Christian course he had set himself resolutely to do battle, had ceased to find a place in his heart; and instead thereof meekness and patience had found there a settled home, and characterised his habitual deportment. And now, in the midst of circumstances of severe discouragement, depression, and great bodily pain and weakness, he could have declared, in St. Paul's words, "None of these things move me."

In May Mr. Vasey attended the District Meeting held at Gateshead. He was the guest of his old friend, Mr. Southern. Extracts from his letters will show how Mr. Vasey was divinely strengthened at this point:—

Gateshead, May 16th, 1871.—Here I am at the close of the day alive and unhurt, praise the Lord! I have got through my day's work without any appreciable fatigue or exhaustion. We have had everything smooth and agreeable; work well forward, between two and three hours conversation on the work of God; and I hope the result will be good on the whole. Every attention is paid me, and I have reason to be grateful both to God and man.

May 17th, 1871.—. . . . I write this after my preaching service. I just preached an hour, with calmness, clearness of voice, and with my usual freedom; and I fear very little will be thought of it as a pulpit effort, but there was a good divine influence, and the people seemed to feel, if one may judge from several bursts of response which they gave. I am really much impressed with this remarkable divine help, which can only have come in answer to prayer, and demands special acknowledgment. It seems little short of miraculous. . . .

Mr. Vasey returned home on Friday the 18th, and met the ministers of the three Sunderland Circuits at their monthly meeting.

On the following day he again left home, despite the

remonstrances of his family, to fulfil an engagement in Manchester for Sunday, May 20th, being most unfit to travel, and returned in an exhausted state. He described himself as having felt so weak on the Sabbath morning, as to be hardly able to mount the pulpit stairs, yet as being so strengthened after commencing his sermon, as to be raised above all sense of bodily weakness.

Mr. Slugg, the companion of Mr. Vasey's schooldays, alludes to this occasion in the following notes:—

Mr. Vasey came to Manchester during the summer of 1871 to re-open Grosvenor-street Chapel after some alterations. He was very unwell on the Sunday morning, and the Rev. G. Follows conducted the former part of the service for him; and so feeble was Mr. V. that Mr. Napier, his host, expected he would never be able to get through his sermon. However, he did, and he became so animated that it seemed as though his weakness was turned into strength, and he preached for an hour and twenty minutes. Mr. Follows told me afterwards that so powerful was his sermon, and so closely did he reason with the sinner, and drive home his argument, that he, Mr. F., could not understand how it could be possible for any one present, who had not given his heart to God, to delay to do so any longer.

At night he preached at Longsight, and remained at the prayer-meetings until ten o'clock.

On the Monday morning Mr. Vasey called on me, and spent an hour with me. On my naming to him that my only son was about to seek an entrance into the Wesleyan ministry; I was led to speak of the sacrifice he was making, and alluded to some of the difficulties and hardships of a Methodist preacher's life. Though he was in a very feeble state of health at the time, I shall never forget how animated he became; assuring me, that to be a Methodist preacher was one of the most glorious things in the world; and that he would not exchange places with the most envied of mortals. The earnestness and enthusiasm he displayed on the subject, made a deep impression on me, and I looked upon him as one of the noblest men I had ever known.

The services to which reference has just been made, were the last public ones in which Mr. Vasey engaged out of his Circuit. He now became rapidly worse, and so susceptible to changes of temperature, that even in crossing the landing from one room to another, the bronchial affection was increased, so that he was compelled to confine himself to the house for a week or two. In spite of every effort made to recruit the failing strength, weakness gained upon him, and it was at

length evident to himself that he must yield and take entire rest.

Having on previous occasions got his exhausted energies recruited by sea voyages, he became extremely anxious to try again the effect of a voyage; and though his friends feared such an experiment in his enfeebled state, he was determined to make it, and was himself sanguine as to the result. Accordingly, he arranged to sail for Lisbon, with his third son as a companion, deciding to take a few days at Harrogate, *en route* for Liverpool.

Preparatory to starting, Mr. Vasey made all the arrangements in his power for the welfare of his Circuit; and, on the evening of Sunday, 4th June, he preached at Hendon Chapel the sermon which proved his last; his text, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost?" Returning home, on his wife expressing her fears lest the exertion should have made him worse, he replied, "I am glad I took the service; and am satisfied that, if I never preach again, I have taken the right subject."

The work of the Holy Spirit was the theme of many of Mr. Vasey's best discourses, and, as this particular sermon was his favourite, and preached extensively to the invariable edification of his hearers, we most reluctantly relinquish-the idea of publishing it in this volume.

Mr. Vasey devoted part of his last evening at home, to the complete settlement of his affairs. Owing to his methodical habits this was the work of a very short time. These habits were observable both in his public and private arrangements. Every engagement was noted carefully in his pocket-book, and so were his daily expenses to a halfpenny; and at the end of the week it was his wont to call upon his wife for her account of the domestic expenditure, and then to strike a balance. At the commencement of each Conference year it was the custom of Mr. Vasey to write out what he termed a "budget," in which he entered under each item of outlay, the highest sum which he could allow for that use; and no matter what retrenchments were required in other respects, the allowance for charities, &c., was never

curtailed. Much more than a tenth was given to God, and if any extra means fell to the lot of the family, these were tithed also.

Although with a limited income this system involved (particularly when high prices obtained) no small amount of anxiety in the house-keeping department, and some self-denial in the household, these were fully compensated when the balance sheet showed a sum on the credit side.

We may also observe that Mr. Vasey when inculcating the obligation upon every man to make his will, and to prepare to meet his God, was not teaching what he did not practice himself. Whilst walking one day in company with a friend, he remarked that he often felt so ill whilst preaching, he should not be surprised if he fell dead in the pulpit, adding, "I could not desire anything better." On the gentleman expressing astonishment, "Well," said Mr. Vasey, I have made my will and said my prayers;" conveying by this observation the impression (which indeed was the fact) that he lived daily with his accounts settled for both worlds. In his family he not unfrequently, even when well in health, expressed himself quite as prepared to meet death, as to go into the next room.

The seasons in which the family united in worship together, were always remarkably profitable. The freshness and taste of Mr. Vasey's language at such times, the intelligent sympathy when the prayer became personal; the intellectual range and depth of his desires, and his power with God were commonly extraordinary, and seemed to rise to their height when the privacy of the circle was most complete, and even the domestic was absent. Then his public exercises were far surpassed.

On the last occasion of this kind, before leaving for Harrogate, as though there was some foreshadowing of what followed, Mr. Vasey made the simple request that they might be resigned to God's will, and prepared to submit to it, whatever it might be. This was a deeply trying time to the family. To her who with aching

heart had watched the development of each new symptom of waning power, and who was prevented by her own feeble health accompanying the beloved object of her solicitude, the contemplation of a voyage undertaken in such circumstances occasioned only misgiving. But He, whose "way is in the sea," and His "path in the great waters," was leading them step by step, though by a way which they knew not, to the accomplishment of his own most gracious purposes concerning his servant.

Notwithstanding the forebodings of Mr. Vasey's family, little did they think when their dearest and best earthly friend had crossed the threshold of their home, he had done so for the last time; or that in leaving Sunderland that place should know him no more for ever, but so it was.

The journey to Harrogate proved very injurious, and on arriving, Mr. Vasey was so ill, he had to be assisted into the cab which conveyed him to his lodgings. Yet, after partaking of some refreshment, he was able to write a letter home, in which he expressed himself as already feeling better for the change. On the following day, however, he was compelled to seek medical advice. Dr. Bealey was summoned, and after careful examination, pronounced Mr. Vasey to be suffering from a disease deep-seated and subtle, complicated with heart complaint and dropsy; the result of long continued feebleness in the circulation, in connection with an unnatural strain upon the system by over-work. The effect of travelling had been greatly to aggravate the symptoms, and congestion of the lungs, with blood spitting, supervened. Mr. Vasey's state was now one of extreme danger. On receipt of the unfavourable tidings, his eldest daughter hastened to Harrogate, to minister to him as only the hand of affection could do, and two days afterwards his two elder sons followed her, not expecting to find their precious father alive. A slight change had, however, taken placefor the better; and he manifested great pleasure in having now four of his children with him.

As his condition necessitated both day and night watch-

ing, Mr. Vasey's two elder sons arranged to take their yearly holiday, that they might each successively assist their sister in nursing their father. At this crisis deep sorrow and anxiety were felt by the loving ones at home, which was shared in a wonderful degree not only by Mr. Vasey's flock, but by people of all communities in Sunderland. The door of his house was besieged by inquirers, and "prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him." Special meetings for prayer on his behalf were convened in Newcastle and Sunderland; and surely, the powerful pleadings of God's people prevailed. Through His blessing on unremitting medical efforts, the progress of disease was arrested, and Mr. Vasey became able again to enjoy the air whilst being wheeled about in a Bath-chair. The letters to his wife, written during this period of their separation, abound in expressions of firm faith in God, and in gratitude for his manifold mercies; particularly as manifested in the kind attentions of friends who seemed to vie with each other in their efforts to alleviate his afflictive circumstances.

We quote some extracts :—

Harrogate, 12*th June*, 1871.

. . . . The die is now cast, and our prospects for the future have become more clear, if not more agreeable. I may as well come to the point at once, and say that the doctor advises—

1. That I should give up absolutely the sea voyage.

2. That I should in like manner forego all idea of the Chair of the Conference.

3. That I should ask leave to sit down for one year at the Conference.

This opinion I at once accepted as an oracle from God.

I had been praying all the morning that I might be Divinely directed, and had received much comfort from my morning's reading in the Scriptures, in the assurance that I should be favoured with full direction.

Again, alluding to the decision of the doctor, and to the trying circumstances in which the whole family were placed, he says—

It is dreadful work to give up these cherished hopes, but I believe it to be the will of God and a part of the godly discipline connected with this dispensation of His Providence, and therefore submit to it.

I hope you will all try to glorify God in this day of visitation; it is

a rare opportunity such as may not occur for a long time to come, and I hope we shall all have grace to improve it. There is One in heaven who will surely say to each of us as He said to Peter, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

Harrogate, June 14th, 1871.

. . . The good news is slow in coming and I am sorry for it on your account. . . . The blood spitting continues, and the difficulty of breathing is not better. I have scarcely been able to eat anything for want of appetite and breath. Upon the whole my spirits are improved and I hope that by Saturday you will be encouraged by better reports. . . . Lillie and Fred are a real comfort to me, and vie with each other who shall wait upon me most.

Harrogate, June 19th, 1871.

. . . I have had two paroxysms of difficult breathing; one in the afternoon, and another or rather a succession of them lasting through the whole of Saturday.

I feel liable to be collared any time by the great monster, and called upon to surrender at discretion; but, thank God, the thought gives me no anxiety or fear, for I feel that my feet rest upon the Rock that cannot be moved. Give my love to Harry and kisses for Alfie and Nellie.

Harrogate, June 20th, 1871.

. . . My report to-day is more favourable than any that I have sent you yet from this place. I had more sleep last night than I have yet had here, and some naps to-day. The dropsical symptoms are fast disappearing. The heart is the only organ that seems to lag behind, and it is the state of the heart which gives me all the distress at nights, Tom acquits himself like a trained nurse, but I cannot get him either to take as much rest as he might at nights, or to recompense himself during the day. . . .

Sunday, the 25th of June, was Mr. Vasey's birthday, and he wrote thus, the day previously, in reference to it:—

Upon the whole, I think we have great reason to let the spirit of praise predominate in our worship to-morrow; and I invite you to join with us at 3 o'clock in the afternoon in an offering of praise to God as a family, for His many and special mercies to us.

In his report of the day afterwards, he says:—

"We had our little thanksgiving meeting in the afternoon yesterday, and had a good time. Mr. Dewhirst popped in just as we began, and took a part in it.

Harrogate, 6th July, 1871.

I am thankful to be able to report favourably of my health to-day again. I have had a fair, quiet night's rest, though at first a little

struggle to get settled. I have not, indeed, felt so well to-day. The weather has been wet, and the air close. We have, however, got well through our correspondence (Harry and Lillie being both at work), and shall dispatch about fourteen or fifteen letters to-night. My cough is much better, and my complexion, and notably the colour of my lips is much improved. I think if I could just peep in at you from behind the screen, I could stand a fair cross-examination for ten minutes, and I wish it could be done, but really my legs seem tied, and unfortunately I have no wings. . . .

July 8th, 1871.

I have a continuance of good news for you; feel sensibly improved; the doctor is well pleased with progress; thinks I ought to prolong my stay in Harrogate, but this I do not like to do; I am longing to see you, and hope Providence will kindly permit us this mutual pleasure very soon.

The 8th of July being the birthday of his youngest boy, Mr. Vasey addressed to him the following little note:—

MY DEAR ALFIE,—I am sorry we did not think of your birthday yesterday, but I now wish you many happy returns of it, and hope that every succeeding anniversary of it will find you a better and a happier boy. You must tell me what you would like me to bring you as a birthday present from Harrogate, and if I can get it for you I will. May God bless you, my dear Alfie, and make His face to shine upon you. So prays your affectionate father,

THOMAS VASEY.

It will be observable from the foregoing letters, that Mr. Vasey was cherishing the hope of an early return to his home in Sunderland. But, alas! this expectation was not realised. He was never again in a condition to bear the fatigue of so long a journey, and they, who for a companionship of twenty-six years had shared each other's joys, and borne each other's burdens, had to endure the agony of a separation prolonged into months, under most painful circumstances. But many alleviations were afforded by a kind and overruling Providence. Mr. Vasey, in the meantime, had his heart cheered and his lot made as comfortable as possible by visits, &c., from loving and generous friends. Particularly was he solaced in the prospect of being permanently laid aside or removed, by an intimation given at this time that a fund was being raised, intended to testify to the respect and

affection entertained towards him by many of his brethren in the ministry, and the Methodist people, &c., generally—particularly in some of his old circuits. Surely the Great Master delighted to honour his faithful servant; and they who assisted in these services rendered in His name, shall not lose their reward.

The following extract was written in reference to these kindnesses:—

> . . . This is all very wonderful to me, and I feel humbled and ashamed before both God and man to be treated so much above my deserts. May we not already see some fruits of this apparently trying dispensation? May we not safely trust our Covenant God with everything as to our future both in this world and the next?

The time of Conference now drew nigh, and as Mr. Vasey's health had improved considerably, he was very anxious to be permitted to attend at least a few of its sittings. He had an ardent love for his brethren in the ministry, and delighted in the annual opportunity of meeting them. But with all that was encouraging in his state, there still lingered many symptoms occasioning deep anxiety, and this desire had to be abandoned.

It was confidently anticipated that he would be elected President of the Conference of 1871. In reference to this probability, the Rev. Benjamin Gregory, in his sketch of him in the *City-road Magazine*, says: "Thomas Vasey was designated by his brethren to the highest honour and the greatest trust they can confer, not merely or mainly because of his fine qualities of head and heart, but as a homage to his thorough-going Methodism. He embraced and ever held its vital principles, fervid evangelism, Scriptural revivalism, and mutual edification. Hence his tenderness to the eccentricities of earnestness."

With regard to the latter remark, we may note that in Mr. Vasey's anxiety to turn to good account the undoubted piety and earnestness of men who perhaps not having knowledge proportioned to their zeal, and being inveterately erratic in their proceedings, sometimes over-

stepped the bounds of prudence and propriety, he was considered by some, to have allowed too much license to persons of this class. But it must be conceded that the difficulty in such cases is to maintain the balance between an extreme of scrupulosity on the one hand, and of latitude on the other.

To return to the question of the Presidency. Mr. Vasey had not, as before the Burslem Conference, in his own mind dwelt on the probability of his own election in 1871, and had discouraged allusion to it in his own immediate circle. Still with his views he would have been pleased to occupy the position, with all the advantages it was likely to afford him for the promotion of God's glory. But how fully he was prepared to submit to God's will in the matter is apparent from a conversation with Mr. Tyson.

In reference to his enforced retirement from the work he loved so well, Mr. Vasey seemed to take comfort in the hope that he might, though laid aside from active duty, still be enabled to use his time for the glory of God; and he began to form plans for the year, always in submission to God's will.

Arrangements were now to be made for the family home. The stewards of the circuit in which he had been labouring were anxious he should continue in his position of superintendent, and engage the assistance of a young man. This idea Mr. Vasey himself entertained, hoping that his health might improve to such a degree as to permit him to resume a part of the duties of his circuit. But his wise medical adviser negatived this scheme *in toto*. Many kind offers and suggestions were made in this season of perplexity and exigency; and at length after much prayerful deliberation Mr. Vasey decided to take a house in Harrogate in which he could be joined by his family; and it was arranged that during the interval of its being prepared for their reception, he should visit his friend, John Blackburn, Esq., of Horsforth.

He continued to write daily to his wife. A few extracts

selected from letters to her and others will suffice to make known his movements and experience, during the remainder of the time he was separated from his family.

Harrogate, July 22nd, 1871.—We have had a busy day, but Lillie will give you particulars. I had a quiet, good night. I am, however, feeble, and was almost overcome by palpitation of the heart and faintness, whilst looking through one of the houses. Still, I am improving in all my symptoms, except that the legs are showing a little tendency to swell.

We have to-day received the stations, and I confess, that when I saw my name down, under the Sunderland circuit, as Supernumerary, I felt a twinge go through me; but it was soon over. I must on Monday (D.V.), frame a letter to the President of the Conference, giving in my resignation.

The reply to Mr. Vasey's letter, tendering his resignation, was as follows:—

Wesleyan Conference, Manchester, July 28th, 1871.

DEAR BROTHER,

The Conference has heard, with sincere sorrow, of the heavy affliction by which it has pleased Almighty God, in His mysterious providence, suddenly to lay you aside from active service, and prevent your presence in the annual assembly of your brethren.

We are directed to assure you of the deep sympathy of the Conference with you in this trial, so unexpected to you and them; of their high esteem and love, and their desire for your restoration to health. They remember with gratitude the efficient service you have been enabled to render to the cause of Christ, by your able and faithful ministry; and by your other varied labours. Your brethren have not failed to join in thanksgiving for your partial relief from suffering, and in supplication that the grace which has been yours in labour, may abound to you now; and that you may be spared to resume your place as a standard-bearer in the good fight, and yet further to extend the triumphs of the Cross. They regret the necessity of your retirement from the full work of the ministry, but cannot refuse your request on this behalf.

On behalf of the Conference,
We are, dear brother,
Yours faithfully,
JOHN H. JAMES, President.
LUKE H. WISEMAN, Secretary.

Rev. Thomas Vasey.

The visits and letters of sympathy which Mr. Vasey received from his brethren, and the assurance of the

prayers of the Conference offered on his behalf, greatly solaced him in this season of heavy trial.

Though rather past date, we think it will not be inappropriate to insert here the following letter addressed to Mr. Vasey by the Irish Conference:—

Wesleyan Conference, Belfast, July 25th, 1871.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

When the President announced your illness to the Conference at an early period of our session, we were filled with sorrow; so that we rejoiced greatly when, on Saturday last, he communicated the gratifying intelligence, that an improvement had taken place in the state of your health. We beg to assure you that we deeply and tenderly sympathise with you in this season of affliction, and trust it will be greatly sanctified; and that you will be comforted by the gracious assurance that "All things work together for good to them that love God." We doubt not that Christ, whose Gospel you have so faithfully preached, will in this season of weakness and suffering be more intimately nigh and more precious to you than ever.

We gratefully remember the profit derived from your able and powerful ministry at the last Conference held in Cork; the ardent flame which your fervent zeal kindled in our breasts, the influence of which remains to this day, and the gratification which our personal intercourse with you afforded. Our ardent prayers shall continue to be offered, that the God of all grace will be pleased to restore you speedily to health, and that you may be spared for many years to labour in the vineyard of the Lord.

I am, rev. and dear sir,
Yours very faithfully,
JOSEPH W. MCKAY, Secretary.

Rev. Thomas Vasey.

Mr. Vasey had often expressed the belief that he would not live long as a Supernumerary. His own wish was to die in the pulpit. "I should like," he frequently asserted, "to have the largest congregation I ever had, and having finished my sermon, to drop down in the pulpit and let my death make the application."

But, in fulfilment of God's purposes, His servant was to be tried in the form he most dreaded—viz., to be laid aside from ministerial duties, with very doubtful prospects of being ever able to resume them. Referring to this trial, Mr. Vasey thus writes to one of his late colleagues:—

I can assure you, when I saw T. V., "Supernumerary," in the stations, it made a choking feeling come up into my throat. Never-

theless, I thoroughly acquiesce in the dispensation, with all its painful results and mysterious causes, and am enabled, from my heart, to praise God for it. As to my soul, it is all bright and clear. I am very happy, and begin to see more clearly some of the merciful designs of God in this dispensation. I trust I shall get enough spiritual good out of it to compensate for all the suffering that it has cost me. The other night, whilst lying awake for three hours, I had such views of God's goodness and wisdom that I was constrained several times to shout "Glory!"

Again, to his wife:—

Harrogate, July, 1871.—If I write much to-day, I am sure to write nonsense, as I have not my wits about me. I am sometimes obliged to stop thinking altogether; the lines that separate the ideal from the actual seem to run into each other, and I weary myself in the endeavour to separate them. My head rebels whenever I tax it with too much thought; but I suppose all this will gradually wear off with time, air, and exercise. Still, these things convince me of the absolute necessity of the course we have taken. The bare idea of having any work to do, or any responsibility, would disable me at once, if it did not kill me outright. . . . .

I think, upon the whole, things look more brightly for us, and appear to be shaping to a definite end, which, in the Lord's good time, will appear. I never felt so much my inability to penetrate the mysterious dispensations of God, and to see the way of his providential leadings before me; and I perfectly agree with you, that to doubt His care and goodness would on our part, be base and ungrateful. Let us, therefore, put a cheerful courage on, and pursue our way from day to day, waiting upon Him for clearer light. . . . I think I have really managed to write a long letter, which will show you I am not quite done for yet. . . . The comfort of this bedroom is really great, and we have added to it to-day by the introduction of a round table, at which Lillie and I sat down, the picture of comfort and enjoyment, and had our tea together. . . . With love to Tom, Harry, Alfie, and Nellie, and a brimful bumper for yourself.

Harrogate, July, 1871.—Your letter received this morning was very welcome. I think we shall be able to carry out the most of your ideas about the house, and may God speed us on to the end. I heartily wish, however, that all this burden of correspondence was taken off your shoulders, by your translation to this delightful country, and free conversation by word of mouth between us. All this, however, will come in the Lord's good time, so there is nothing to do but patiently to wait till the happy period arrives. . . . As to the weekly accounts, I could not find in my heart to ask you for them in your present busy circumstances; but if you could just send me your original memoranda, it might employ many a rainy day to put them straight. I feel as though we were all going wrong when my accounts are not posted up. I have spent the morning in a train of meditation about you, my queen, and, beginning with our first acquaintance, recalled, by reference to each circuit, all the happy times we have had together. I assure you, my darling, it was like a little love-feast, and

I finished with a devout wish that it might please God to take me first, that I might not have to bear the pain of separation from you.

Again :—

July 27th, 1871.—I have a letter from Mr. John Blackburn this morning. We shall go on Saturday afternoon, and Lillie will remain long enough to see me comfortably settled, and then come to you. . . . I am so thankful at the thought that Lillie will be released for your help, and heartily thank you for letting me have her services so long. She has done her duty well, and has shown me every possible care and attention. I shall miss her sadly. . . . I heartily wish we were settled quietly at home again; and I think from my present feelings it will be a permanent home for us. . . . I feel so thoroughly undermined in my whole system, that I see no prospect of resuming active duty. But we must wait upon events, and rest in the will of God for the future. . . .

Mr. Vasey wrote the following letter to his sister two or three days after reaching Horsforth :—

August 2nd, 1871. . . . I am thankful to inform you that I am much better than when I last saw you, and that the quiet and comfort of this place are telling much in my favour. If we had the furnishing of the Harrogate house finished, we should, I have no doubt, by the blessing of God, be very happy. Glory be to His name!

To his wife, Mr. Vasey writes :—

August 4th, 1871. . . . I am thankful to say that I am very happy and comfortable in this quiet and pleasant home.

The weather here is most delightful, and I can get the full benefit of it without any exertion. I slept with my windows open all last night, and the room was filled with a delightful freshness and aroma, which greatly lightened the pressure of my ill-feelings. Yet I must, if possible, get my heart tranquilised, it is so very exhausting to have this constant palpitation night and day. I am afraid I cannot expect a state of things which has been going on so long to disappear suddenly, but it will give way gradually to the means employed; and especially after we get settled together. I am anxious you should rejoin me, and shall think the interval very long.

I shall devote this afternoon to thinking and praying for you all. I am very sorry that I cannot be with you to assist in the work and to afford you a little relief. It is one of the sorest parts of my affliction, and it is only by my prayers I can help you, which are offered up sincerely and earnestly on your behalf. I trust that this trouble will get over as others have done, and that when we are united, our sense of happiness will be proportioned to the trials we have had to undergo during our separation. If it were not that all this seems to have been brought upon us by the hand of Providence, I should despair; but what God inflicts, He can give us grace to bear, and the indications we have had so far, justify our belief and hope that God will bring us through. I confess that my anxieties now all centre in you, and I beg you will take all the care of yourself you possibly can. . . . I am ashamed of the selfishness which has filled my own letters almost

entirely, but I knew that that was what you principally wanted to hear about, and so, as in other things, the demand regulated the supply. I shall be under still greater obligations to you for your exertions on my behalf, and I shall have much pleasure in nursing you and paying more attention to your comfort than I have been able to do. I think we shall have the happiest winter we ever enjoyed. . . . Give my kind love and best wishes to Tom and Harry, also love to Lillie, and lots of kisses for Alfie and Nellie. Shall be very glad to have sweet little Alfie for a companion when I get back to Harrogate.

August 6th, 1871.—I have received yours this morning, and hasten to relieve your anxiety about me, by informing you that I am considerably better. My tepid bath last night assisted to tranquillise my nervous system, and I managed to get a good deal more sleep, and felt considerably better this morning when I got up.

I am sitting here in the cool of the evening, but the sweat is standing on my face. If I were a little younger, I might say that I was quite jolly; but as this would be inconsistent with the dignity of a supernumerary, I must say that I am doing pretty well.

August 11th, 1871.—Lest you should not have received one, I send you a copy of the stations, by which you will see that I am now officially superseded and silenced, both as chairman, superintendent, and circuit minister, and altogether off the list of deputations and official appointments.

I confess that this has given a melancholy tinge to my thoughts to-day, which has not improved my health and spirits. I tried to write to you this morning, but could not, and had to lie down and sleep instead. I have arranged with Mr. Palliser to go in on Monday and stay with him till the house is ready to afford decent accommodation.

A week will now soon be over, and I trust, by the blessing of God, we shall get over it pretty well, and, after a while, be at rest. I feel daily more convinced that my recovery will not be rapid, and that I have a great many difficulties to face before I am quite out of danger, even for the present.

August 12th, 1871.—Yours of the 11th received with many thanks. I rejoice to think this weary letter-writing will soon be over, yet I feel nervous as the time approaches for your journey, and unspeakably distressed at the idea of your taking it without me. It is, I think, the severest discipline that we have ever had to pass through, and no doubt is intended to work the greatest moral result, which I trust we shall both realise in our increased purity and happiness to the end of our lives. I am better to-day, notwithstanding the heat, which makes such havoc with my nights' rest, as I am afraid it will of yours also. But cheer up, my darling, we shall get through by God's help, and then we shall have a fair and bright prospect before us soon. Lillie is doing bravely at Harrogate, and will gain an experience that will be of service for life. I shall pray much for you all to-morrow.

The removal from Sunderland having to be conducted hurriedly, there was at this period busy life at home. Mr. Vasey assisted the harassed ones by his prayers.

After a sojourn of a fortnight at the pleasant residence of his kind friends at Horsforth, during which he had received all possible care and attention, and had made some sensible improvement in health, he returned to Harrogate. He was, however, still subject to the distressing heart symptoms, and immediately on his arrival felt necessitated to consult his medical adviser, and the old treatment was resumed. Meantime his daughter had again returned to Sunderland to assist in the operations preparatory to the removal of the family; and during the few days interval before their arrival in Harrogate, Mr. Vasey was the guest of his old friends Mr. and Mrs. Palliser.

His mind was now much exercised with anxiety in reference to the new house, and the journey in prospect for his suffering wife; and he displayed great solicitude that everything should be prepared for her comfortable reception. Whilst, simultaneously, at Sunderland, devoted children were devising every arrangement possible, to diminish the distress of travelling under such circumstances.

On the evening preceding the intended journey, on the arrival of the invalid carriage ordered, it was ascertained that its doors were not sufficiently wide to admit the bed upon which Mrs. Vasey would travel. As the only, and really as it proved excellent, alternative, a guard's van was engaged, which was soon transformed into a comfortable sitting room. No arrangements could have been better; but with all the precautions used, the journey had a distressing effect upon the invalid, and she arrived at Harrogate in a very exhausted state. Mr. Vasey was at the station to meet and welcome his loved ones, and failing to discover in the train an invalid carriage, he was, for a moment, overcome by the fear that Mrs. Vasey had been unable to continue the journey to the termination. This dread was, however, speedily dispelled, and never can his children forget the scene presented when their precious father having joined them, stood clapping his hands beside the half-unconscious object of his solicitude, in the joy of receiving her alive.

And great was the happiness in that long divided family on that Saturday evening, when they were, with the exception of one boy, then at school, united once more under one roof. How did the hearts of parents and children thrill with thankfulness when all were gathered to offer the tribute of praise and thanksgiving to Him who, in the depth of their distresses, perplexities, sufferings, and sorrows, had comforted, guided, succoured, and sustained, and permitted this reunion.

But the period of rejoicing was of momentary duration; it was as a lull in the storm,—as a gleam of sunshine through overhanging clouds. Even that evening the quick eye of affection detected indications which could only point to one issue, subduing effectually the joyous feelings, which otherwise would have had unbounded sway.

It cannot be doubted, that in the midst of His severe providences, the Lord had mercifully interposed to arrest the progress of disease through the efforts of the skilful physician; affording an interval in which arrangements could be made for the comfortable reunion of the household of His suffering servant. Surely his family can never forget this special token of the loving kindness and tender mercy of Him, who ever "stayeth His rough wind in the day of the east wind."

For a few days after Mr. Vasey had got into his new house, he manifested some sense of enjoyment. He would occasionally play with his little ones, and take a stroll with them into the fields in the neighbourhood, or he would sit by the bedside of his wife, his face expressing contented happiness. He also interested himself in the furnishing details, which through the delay of the workmen were far from complete; and took particular pleasure in superintending the fitting up of a room, adjoining that of Mrs. Vasey, to be used as his study, in which he hoped to employ his pen for God's glory. But the mortal disease, which had laid hold on his frame, and had for years been insiduously undermining his vital energies, step by step was proceeding to fulfil its com-

mission. Nor could the unremitting, and skilful attentions of his most kind and disinterested medical attendant, nor the devoted services of those to whom his life was so precious, avail for more than the alleviation of the most distressing symptoms. Day by day one effort or enjoyment after another had to be abandoned; but there was no complaining; only there evidently lingered a longing to do a little more service for his Master; his heart was not yet disengaged from the loved employment of his life. He would sometimes say playfully, "There is work in the old man yet." And he would watch with deep interest and with some anxiety the effect of any new treatment, and was most diligent in the use of the means prescribed for his relief. He did not as yet fully recognise it to be the will of God he should die.

The window of his room commanded an extensive prospect, and he delighted greatly in the scene at sunset. After gazing for some time in quiet pleasure one evening, he exclaimed: "This is a beautiful world. I am not tired of it yet. It has used me well. I have had a great deal of happiness in it. I would like to live a little longer. I have no cowardly desire to shirk the duties of life."

The end of August, however, witnessed a decided change for the worse in his condition, so that the hope of prolonging a life so holy and precious became fainter and fainter. The dropsical symptoms were increased, so, also, was the suffering in the heart. The head, too, sympathised with the distressed body, making the power of sustained thought difficult. A struggle now commenced in his spirit. He would recline in his easy chair for hours with closed eyes, now and then betraying by some expression the dawning conviction that the Lord was about to remove him from his family and the Church. These were the darkest days in that last illness. But the triumph of Divine grace was manifested in the relinquishment of the last cherished hope, in perfect acquiescence and unwavering confidence. He would

have been thankful and happy to have remained a little longer to fight the battles of the Lord against the mighty; but he had buckled on the armour at the command of the great Captain, and at His word he was prepared to lay it aside.

Notwithstanding increased weakness and suffering, he could still take occasional drives, and cheerfully welcomed the visits of old friends in the neighbourhood, and from Leeds, Bradford, and more distant places; and would dwell with deep thankfulness on the many alleviations of his lot provided through their kindness, which knew no bounds.

His sister-in-law (who had been an inmate of his house for many years), arriving on a visit, Mr. Vasey expressed much pleasure at seeing her. He had about him the simplicity of a little child, and delighted in every attention shown him, expressing his wonder that he should be so privileged. His humility was most striking, and was manifested towards every one about him, and he was continually giving utterance to the joy and confidence of his soul.

About this period he received a letter from a friend in one of his old circuits, in which was mentioned that much spiritual quickening had been the result of Mr. Vasey's illness to both ministers and people. On its being suggested that probably this effort might, through the Divine blessing, be more widely diffused, his eye kindled, and the whole of his countenance beamed whilst he expressed his delight at the thought, saying, again and again during that day, "I do thank you for that thought; God must have given it you for my comfort." He had been "lavish of life in Jesus' cause." Only for the sake of that glorious cause did he desire prolonged life; and for this cause he was prepared cheerfully to lay it down. Particularly did his soul yearn for the prosperity of the Church in which he had laboured so devotedly, and more than once these heart yearnings found expression in fervent and almost agonising prayer—that his death might be the means of more extended prosperity and

spiritual good than the whole of his life's labour had been.

At the twilight hour, during several evenings in the first week of September, Mr. Vasey entered into deeply solemn conversations with his wife; in which step by step, he reviewed the whole of his life in all its experiences and bearings. Some of the precious observations which fell from his lips at these sacred seasons we give.

I was cradled in sorrow, and to this I believe I owe the formation of my character.

I think I can say truly that, after my conversion, I never wilfully sinned against God, nor wickedly departed from His ways.

Referring to his call to the ministry, he said:

When first I felt it I resisted greatly; it cost me many struggles to give up my worldly position and prospects. But when I yielded it was a most full and complete surrender. I gave up everything for the work of the ministry, and devoted myself with all my powers, both of body and soul, to the service of God; and I believe that to this unconditional consecration, at the commencement of my ministerial career was owing the success with which I have been favoured. He said: "I have nothing to boast of in my services, nothing whatever; everything that I have done looks so poor. But the Lord does not look so much at the details and the execution as at the intentions and aims; and I can say in all sincerity that my motives were pure. I never went into the pulpit without the determination, by God's grace, to win souls to Jesus, and I believe my services were accepted. I think I can say with St. Paul, 'I have fought a good fight,' &c."

He then expressed his satisfaction, and thanked God that he ever became a Methodist preacher. Said he: "It is the grandest position any man can occupy. There is not another in this world so honourable and useful. It is glorious work, that of saving souls; and if I had my life to live over again I would choose this employment above all others." Then he added: "I believe that if our ministers would preach with more of the power of the Holy Ghost the world would soon be saved!"

Alluding to his marriage, after inexpressible words of love and tenderness, he said:

I shall have to thank God through all eternity that ever I married you. I am glad we never allowed domestic interests to interfere with my engagements in preaching. I believe we have been specially cared for on this account. I shall often be with you, particularly when alone. We shall love each other for ever. I will come with Sissy (his daughter in Heaven) to the station to meet you.

With regard to the position of President, he declared:

I did not desire it for the honour, but should have liked the oppor-

tunity to give effect from the chair to the views I have held so long, and I had a hope that in this way God would use me for His glory. But He knows, and does what is best.

His daughter coming into the room on one of these occasions, he said, "Cleave to Jesus, my love;" and then in solemn, earnest and tender tones, he warned her against the temptations of the world—its maxims and pleasures; and exhorted her to look for happiness only in the continual enjoyment of the favour of God.

Friday, Sept. 8th.—Mr. Vasey woke in the night very ill, and believed himself dying. After a stimulant had been administered, he said, "Dying is serious work. It is a solemn thing for a human soul with intelligent perceptions of what it is. But Jesus is near to help, and to save, and through Him I shall have victory. Satan does not reign, death does not reign, the grave does not reign, but Jesus reigns! Glory to God! What could I feel better than this? I should like to go on to the landing, and let all in the house hear me shout, Glory. O how good God is to unworthy me. I feel that there is nothing in me so poor, so lean, I am in myself, but glory to God, I have the faith of Christ in my soul. I am sure that through Him I shall be accepted and saved. I feel now as ready to die as to go into the next room. It is only rising to a higher position, like going from breaking stones on the highway to a more respectable vocation. I should have been glad to have lived longer, but I do not wish to live from any selfish feeling, or for family motives, but to do more good. I believe, however, that God will give me work to do in His upper kingdom, I feel sure of this."

This belief that his Master would find him employment in heaven was most comforting to him, and he frequently expressed it in confident terms.

On the morning succeeding the night of the deathly attack, Mr. Vasey desired to have the whole of his family about him. Accordingly his two sons in the north, and his boy at Woodhouse Grove, were brought by 'egram. He manifested extreme pleasure on their

arrival, and continued throughout the day very peaceful and happy. The memory of its close can never be erased from the hearts of those privileged to be with him. The room of sickness was literally the vestibule of the celestial home. So tender and affecting were his expressions of love and gratitude—so touching and solemn his counsels to those about him, with ever and anon such bursts of praise—nothing could exceed the heavenliness of the scene. The evening closed with a prayer in which he named each of his own family, and his near relations by blood and marriage, and which seemed to comprehend the needs of all for time and for eternity, and concluded with a fervent petition for the welfare of his last circuit, which he prayed might through his death be revived and prosperous.

During the night his restlessness was extreme. Whilst his two eldest sons were endeavouring in every possible way to minister to his relief, he thanked them repeatedly, and now and again lovingly counselled them in the following words :—

Do everything to secure the favour of God, and leave all results with Him. Copy the old Methodists : they might not be polished or learned, but they went to the root of the matter. Their preaching had in it the very marrow of the Gospel—repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the witness of the spirit, and devotedness of life. Sermons in these days are too often made up of light frothy matter, with just a little of what is solid at the close.

Never be fascinated with the glare and tinsel of the world, or you will soon be ready to do anything to get rich. You will often be inclined to an expenditure according to your desires, and not according to what is right ; but always keep within your income : that is the secret of a comfortable and happy life now-a-days. Make friends with a *worthy* man wherever you find him, without regard to his being rich or poor. Always reverence a saint when you see him.

If permitted I'll peep in at you in the laboratory sometimes. I'll give you a lift if I can.

Sunday, September 10th, the doctor calling early, Mr. Vasey's greeting was, "Now, doctor, I am going to get my crown to-day."

The ruling passion of his life manifested itself most strikingly on that day. Though so ill, he insisted upon

seeing everyone, kindly inquiring his condition, that he might improve the occasion for God's glory, and the everlasting welfare of those to whom it would be his last opportunity to speak. To each he expressed, in cheerful tones, his expectation of death, and his glorious prospect of immortality, and addressed a few affectionate and faithful words of counsel, or warning, or encouragement. Particularly was he comforted himself by the visit of one who had come purposely to shake hands with him, and to inform him that he had been converted to God under his ministry. He hailed with special delight the company of praying friends, and whilst Mr. Reed engaged in this exercise beside him, he clapped his hands in evident ecstasy.

In the afternoon he summoned his children one by one to his bedside, giving each his blessing as they approached him; he then requested they should join in singing with him "Pope's Ode." Observing that they faltered through emotion, he took the music-book, and with firmness and deep seriousness, sang the whole of it, his soul entirely absorbed in the words.

Monday, September 11th, his second son received his farewell benediction, and returned to his business duties, his eldest son remaining, through the kind consideration of his employer, to share in the privilege of nursing his dying father.

The summons, however, did not come so soon as Mr. Vasey anticipated, and he was spared for a fortnight longer to encourage and to confirm the faith of all who were witnesses of his triumph. Day by day he grew more heavenly; every thought, word, action, and even look indicated the close proximity of his soul to the better land.

He continued, however, to manifest an interest in the arrangements of the house, and particularly was he anxious that the room occupied by his invalid wife, should be fortified against the bleak winter winds. He drew with his own hands the window curtains, to ascertain if they would afford the necessary defence. After it had

become dangerous for him to ascend the stairs, he pleaded to be permitted to go down once more to view the only room he had not seen after its completion, said he, "that I may know how you will look after I have left you." This request could not be refused, and accordingly leaning upon the arms of his children, he took his final walk down stairs, and returned pleased and satisfied, happily not having taken any harm.

After being quietly settled in his room again, he said: "I should have been glad to have stayed with you over Christmas had it been God's will." This had been always a peculiarly joyous season in his happy household, and to no member of it more than to himself. The accustomed "Tree" set up in mama's room, and hung with little offerings in token of love and good wishes, delighted "dada," as much as the youngest member of the home circle. But he, the life of that circle was to be raised to the enjoyment of more enduring pleasures, even to those which were at God's right hand for evermore! And his loving ones when Christmas arrived had to mourn the absence of him, who had by his joyous countenance, cheery tones, and loving greetings, contributed so much to their hilarity on those happy occasions.

Mr. Vasey continued to be comforted by the receipt of letters and messages of sympathy, and assurances of prayerful interest from his brethren in the ministry and other friends. About this time he received the following resolution from his old districts:—

At the meeting of the Financial District Committee, of the Newcastle District, held at Brunswick-place Wesleyan Chapel, Newcastle-on-Tyne, on Wednesday, the 13th of September, 1871,

On the motion of Mr. John George Fenwick, seconded by the Rev. Thomas Brookes, supported by Messrs. Robert Bell and T. C. Squance, and the Rev. Robert Stephenson, it was unanimously resolved:

"That the members of this District Committee desire to express their devout thankfulness to Almighty God for the valuable services which the Rev. Thomas Vasey has been enabled to render for many years in the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion, and more especially for his faithful and successful labours as the chairman of this district for the *last five* years. They would also convey to Mr. Vasey the assurance of their undiminished attachment to him, of their deep

sympathy with him in the continued and severe affliction with which it has pleased God in His wise and merciful Providence to visit him, and of their earnest prayers on his behalf, that if it be the will of God he may be spared to his family and to the Church, that he may have the abounding consolations of the Holy Ghost in every time of need, and that at last an entrance may be administered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"Signed on behalf and by order of the District Committee,

"W. ANDREWS, Chairman,
"JOHN FLETCHER, Secretary."

The succeeding letter reached Mr. Vasey by the hands of the Rev. John Farrar.

Headingley, Leeds, September 20th, 1871.

MY DEAR BROTHER VASEY,

I am requested by the ministers assembled in the Financial District Meeting in Leeds to convey to you their deep sympathy with yourself and your afflicted wife, in your present providential trials.

They scarcely expected the pleasure of your presence among them, but they have been greatly profited by hearing of your unshaken faith and abounding consolations in Christ.

They are gratified by your brotherly remembrance of them, and rejoice that the faithful Lord, whom you successfully served in health, enables you now to trust and triumph in His all-sufficient grace.

They have unitedly commended you and yours to His most gracious care and benediction, who never forgets any of His promises, and who declares for the comfort of His dying servants, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in Me."

I would that some worthier hand had conveyed this message to you, but notwithstanding that defect, accept the sympathy of your assembled brethren, and the assurance that you will be still remembered in their prayers.

I am, on behalf, of the meeting,
Yours truly and affectionately,

Rev. T. VASEY. J. B. GOODWIN, Secy.

Mr. Vasey now began to indulge in thoughts of heaven and of the welcome awaiting him from his three sainted children, and from his mother.

He said, "I am sure, Sissy (his daughter who had died some years before), will come to meet me." One night he was heard to say, "Wait for me, my dear child." On being questioned in the morning as to what he meant, he said, "I do not know whether it was a dream or a reality.

but Sissy came to me, I was just throwing my arms about her, when she put out her hands as if to prevent me, saying, 'Wait a little, dada."

He declared, "My faith and hope stand firm and strong to the last. The Lord is going to take me to rest and glory. I am going to be married to the King of Glory."

Again, "Welcome illness! welcome death! What is death? It is the passport to glory. It opens the door to the kingdom of heaven. My Covenant-God will do all things well. I shall find all I want, the wedding garment and the wedding ring. It is all joyful, nearer and nearer home."

He frequently quoted with deep feeling the words:—"I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, Thou knowest." And then with most touching pathos of expression, and slowly shaking his beautiful head, he would pray, "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord."

After a night of pain, he had the window blinds drawn up as soon as it was light, and when the sun rose, exclaimed, "Beautiful light! beautiful air! beautiful sun! Oh, Sun of Righteousness, arise with healing in Thy wings.

> Oh disclose Thy lovely face,
> Quicken all my drooping powers, &c.

We are glad to be favoured with a letter for insertion dictated by Mr. Vasey on Saturday, September 23rd, addressed to a young friend who had been a member of his Saturday evening class in Newcastle, and to whom he had been the means of great spiritual benefit, he himself declaring on a public platform, "I owe more to Mr. Vasey than to any man living." The letter will inspire a deeper interest, when it is known that he to whom it was penned has, after a few years of consecrated and successful effort in the cause of the Saviour, been removed to nobler service in the upper Temple.

Mr. Vasey writes :—

Oatlands Mount, Harrogate, September 23rd, 1871.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

My life is getting pressed into a corner, and does not promise to hold out much longer, but I wish, before I leave this world, to send you an encouraging word. You have, by God's grace sanctifying to you heavy trials, been brought very near to Him, and lifted into a higher spiritual life, and I trust that by pains, and watchfulness, you will be able to maintain the ground you have gained and make still further advances. Be assured, the higher ground in religion is the only one you can safely occupy. Let your motto be "Holiness unto the Lord." May God grant you a bright crown and a rich reward at last! . . . Earth with me begins to recede now very fast, and heaven comes near with its everlasting joys. May we have a joyful meeting there! I do find now, and expect to find to the end, Christ unspeakably precious.

My love and best greeting to your wife. Do not forget to remember me to your father and mother, with thanks for all their past kindness; also, to my old class-mates, whom I hope to meet in heaven.

Accept my last and best love, and meet me in heaven.

Yours affectionately,
THOMAS VASEY.

Mr. C. Bainbridge, Newcastle.

The two friends, minister and layman have met, to recount together labours of love and victories won in their respective spheres, and to unite in ascribing blessing and honour and glory and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Monday, Sept. 25th.—He had spent a weary night. Whilst sitting with folded hands and closed eyes, a most beautiful smile was observed to play over his face, and suddenly turning to his wife he exclaimed, "Mama, I am so happy, I never was so happy before, I have had such a manifestation of Jesus. He came to me, and said, 'I have come to take you into My arms,' and He has taken me, and is folding me to His breast, and it is like a bed of roses. What is that verse about downy pillows?" On the lines being repeated

Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are.

He said, "Yes, that is what I feel. I know He will keep me safe. Now I am prepared for anything, either

to linger or to go at once. This will keep me through everything."

The Rev. Josiah Pearson calling, he described the revelation thus: "My Master has been, and He stood before me; bade me come to Him; opened His arms. I went straight to Him; He put His arms around me, and then pressed me to His heart! Oh, it was fine! Glory be to God! I am unspeakably happy! If this be dying, God's servants need not fear death. Praise the Lord!" On Mr. Pearson reminding him that if taken away he would leave a prostrate wife and six fatherless children, his immediate and holy rejoinder was, "My dear brother, my father died when I was four years old, and the Lord who has taken care of Thomas Vasey so many years can take far better care of my dear wife and children than I could were I to live." Pointing to his poor sinking body: "They would have to take care of me. I can leave them with my God; He will take care of them."

In reply to the Rev. George Scott's inquiry, "How do the truths which you have been accustomed to preach to others appear to you now?" Mr. Vasey said, "They encircle me like so many pillars;" and added, "Never hesitate to offer Christ to the vilest sinner upon earth down to the latest moment of his existence."

On this day, his sister coming to see him, to her and others calling, he expressed himself in strains of holy confidence; his beaming countenance all the while reflecting so much of his inward joy and happiness, that the traces of weariness and suffering were scarcely to be found in his face, and no one seeing him as he sat by the window enjoying the landscape, could imagine he was a dying man.

Tuesday, September 25th, being the twenty-first anniversary of the birth of his second son, he made an effort the day previously to trace with his own hand a letter of congratulation, &c. It is almost too sacred for publicity, but being the last lines he ever formed, and containing so much valuable counsel, we give it verbatim.

Harrogate, 25th September, 1871.

MY DEAR HARRY,

My right hand has almost forgotten its cunning, but it may perhaps muster enough to indite a few lines to you on this important occasion. To-morrow (D.V.) you will be a man in the full, legal sense of the word, and the day marks a very important event in your life. I have to remind you of the solemn personal obligations and responsibilities which in the sight of God you contract, and of which no human power can divest you, as a citizen of the realm; and I hope you will endeavour to meet those responsibilities in the spirit of entire dependence on God's grace in Christ, and with an earnest resolve to apply yourself to your duties like a man and a Christian.

You may well be encouraged to aim at doing your duty as a man and a Christian, by the promises of God in Christ, as well as by your experience of His past grace and help. Be assured He will never fail you, if you put your whole trust in Him and continually seek His grace. I have great hope of your doing well, and fully expect that, by God's free and infinite grace in Christ, you will get to heaven at last, and meet me there. Do, my dear boy, make this the ruling principle and aim of your life, and let nothing turn you aside from it. To the care and grace of your Saviour and God in Christ I do most earnestly commend you. May the Lord bless you and keep you to your life's end, and bring you to glory everlasting, for Christ's sake! We all unite in wishing you many happy returns of your birthday.

I am much worse to-day, and disease seems to be making more rapid progress; but it is all well, and through the mercy of God, through Christ, I can face death without fear, "having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

Give my love to dear Tom, and believe me to be ever,

Your affectionate father,

THOMAS VASEY.

On Tuesday, hearing of the sudden death of a minister who had called to see him only a few days previously, he exclaimed, "Brother Felvus has got the start of me; he has stepped into heaven before me."

Wednesday—The arrival of his third son for the Michaelmas holidays cheered him, and on the following day his eldest son returning unexpectedly to remain with his dying father through his last hours, Mr. Vasey clapped his hands in delight. It was to him a special source of happiness that the members of his own family could minister to him throughout his illness.

The precious life was now rapidly drawing to a close; dropsy had rapidly gained ground, and the heart had become so troubled and depressed that very little sleep

could be procured in a reclining position. Great also was the restlessness, and it was apparent that flesh and heart were failing fast. Nevertheless, he was not confined to bed, and could walk across the room.

On Thursday evening he requested that some hymns about heaven from Wesley's collection should be selected, and greatly enjoyed listening, whilst they were sung to the music of the piano in the adjoining room.

The succeeding night was more tranquil than any Mr. Vasey had enjoyed for many weeks, and the commencement of the last day of life found him apparently in a more comfortable physical condition than for a considerable time. Through the day, he was calmly happy, and nothing in his appearance denoted the near approach of the last foe. He read with interest a copy of the week's *Watchman*, and the only anxiety he expressed was, that his family should join him in prayer for some decided effect of his medicine, if it were God's will.

A little before seven in the evening, suddenly exclaiming, "I am faint," he sank into a state of unconsciousness; from which he only recovered to enter upon the last conflict. On seeing the deep distress and anxiety depicted on the faces of those around him, he assured them he felt better. Afterwards at intervals, he expressed his happiness at the prospect of being so soon with Jesus, and closing his eyes requested there might be perfect stillness whilst he held communion with his Saviour. "Precious Jesus, my Jesus, my Savious!" Several verses were quoted which seemed to afford him much comfort, and on the first verse being repeated of the hymn

> Cast on the fidelity of my redeeming Lord,

he joined in confident tones in the three last lines—

> My Saviour in distresses past,
> Will not now His servant leave,
> But bring me through at last.

"How sweet to be going home, I shall have a fine day to-morrow."

As the struggle was long and severe, he once and again alluded to his sufferings, but said, "My Saviour suffered on the tree; I must be patient," adding, "I am safe, my feet are on the Rock that cannot be moved, and I shall be lifted up to glory."

He then embraced his family one by one, blessed them, and commended them to their Father, God.

He desired his children to look after their mother, and asking, "Are you all there," he gave his final benediction with touching emphasis, in these words, "The Lord bless you, and keep you, the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."

Being reminded that his second son was not present, with quivering lips and failing strength, he said, "Give him the last kiss to make up for his absence."

In the midst of his suffering, he thanked the doctor, and all about him, for their attentions, and on Mrs. Vasey reminding him of the manifestation of the previous Monday, and inquiring if Jesus still held him, he replied, "Oh yes, He does, and He will carry me safely through."

After he had seemed to cease noticing outward objects, he opened his eyes occasionally, and, looking round upon his dear ones, with a sweet smile, and nodding his head, said, "I see you;" and, as a last effort, threw one arm around his wife and the other round his eldest son who was supporting him.

His mind now began to wander a little, but rousing himself, as if conscious that the moment of his departure was come, he clasped his hands and said, "LORD JESUS INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT!" and immediately his spirit fled to the Throne of God.

He was laid to rest beside his two children in Woodhouse Cemetery, Leeds. The deep respect and affection entertained by the people of Leeds, and the neighbouring and more distant places, were strikingly manifested by the spontaneous attendance of hundreds, who, forming a procession of great extent, walked with tender and reverent sorrow to his burial, whilst crowds (many of

them sincere mourners) lined the road from Brunswick Chapel to the cemetery.*

O faithful soldier! are thy conflicts ended?
  Armour of God, and sword, and shield laid down?
Thy battle-shouts with victory's songs were blended,
  And on the cross thy crown.

O valiant warrior, and thy long campaigning,
  Thy mighty sword was never sheathed or blunt;
But thou wert evermore fresh conquests gaining,
  And in the battle's front.

Fighting for thy dear Lord, His standard waving;
  Courageous ever, ever in the field;
Faithful to death wast thou, all dangers braving,
  And rather die than yield.

Conquering and to conquer, stern untiring,
  Battling for Christ His heritage to claim.
Thy fellow-soldiers with new zeal inspiring,
  And love for Jesus' name.

Now thou art resting on the field of glory,
  Buried by comrades with their arms reversed,
And by the camp fires often is the story
  Of thy brave deeds rehearsed.

O victor! thy love we covet to prove,
  And thy mantle to wear,
And fight until death, thy triumph to share!

* Shortly after Mr. Vasey's death, his friends at Harrogate erected a beautiful marble tablet in the Wesleyan Chapel, in token of their affectionate esteem for his memory.

SUPPLEMENT.

We supplement the preceding records with an extract from the *Methodist Recorder*, of October, 1871, and several valuable letters from esteemed friends.

DEATH OF THE REV. THOMAS VASEY.

The death of the Rev. Thomas Vasey is an event which will be felt by thousands of our readers as a personal sorrow. Such is our sense of the loss that the Methodist communion has sustained by his removal, that we feel it a difficulty to select language which, without appearing to border on exaggeration, will adequately convey our impressions on this mournful occasion. It is no ordinary man who has been released from the conflicts and sufferings of this mortal body to join the blessed company of the faithful in the Great Master's house above. Humanly speaking, in any line of life or profession whatever which Mr. Vasey might have chosen, he would have attained to distinction. In any company or association it would have been impossible for a man of such singular ability and such marked individuality of character to escape observation, or to fail of attaining a prominent position. Before attaining the age of twenty-five, he had already worked his way to a position which opened to him the prospect of a prosperous and even brilliant career; while other indications seemed to justify the anticipation of his rising rapidly to distinction, not only in mercantile, but in more public life. All this, however, he forsook at the Master's call; and, from the day when he bade farewell to the pursuits of finance and commerce, to the end of his career, he seems never to have cast one lingering look behind, or to have repented of the choice which consigned him to the comparative poverty of a minister of the Gospel among the Methodist people. With no pretensions to profound scholarship, Mr. Vasey was a man of extensive reading and of highly-cultivated mind. Not only was he well versed in the studies proper to his sacred calling, but he contrived, amidst its laborious and often anxious duties, to acquire an amazing amount of general knowledge. Possessing a singular facility of expression, and being free from that morbid self-consciousness which is the fatal foe to good conversation, there was a charm in his talk, which was still further heightened by his exquisite sincerity and simplicity. A more pure-hearted, noble-minded man than Thomas Vasey never existed; and if in any instance his judgment might be thought to be at fault, it was impossible to withhold admiration from that outspoken candour, that unfailing courage, that transparent honesty, and that irresistible good

humour which endeared him to all, and especially to his brethren in the ministry. As a preacher he was singularly gifted; and although, as is necessarily the case with a purely extempore speaker, he occasionally failed, yet these instances, especially in his later years, were exceedingly rare, while very frequently his sermons were masterpieces of vivid eloquence, and were attended with extraordinary power. Mr. Vasey was eminently and emphatically a man of God. He lived near heaven's gate. He breathed the pure and vitalising air of the holy mount. Entirely free from sanctimoniousness, he was eminent for sanctity. Disciplined for long years in the school of affliction and suffering, he profited above his equals, and attained at length to a rare elevation and perfection of holiness. Accordingly, there was not a vestige of the Pharisee in his demeanour—no widened phylacteries, no ostentation of superior sanctity, no sourness, no stereotyped formalities, but the simplicity and naturalness of a child, combined with the graces and the strength of a father in Israel. Eminent as were his public gifts, it was in his own home that some of the noblest and most attractive features of his character were displayed. We will not venture to intrude upon the privacy of domestic life; nor can we say more than that one of the brightest and most touching pages in his biography will be that which shall describe home devotion and tenderness.

The failure of Mr. Vasey's health in the early part of this year was regarded by not a few of his friends with serious apprehension. But although his symptoms had been alarming, and his sufferings and prostration great, it was expected, at the recent Conference, that he might last for some time longer; and the hope was even entertained that he might so far rally as to be fit for duty again after a year of entire rest and relaxation. But it was otherwise ordained. His reward was nearer than had been anticipated. Had he been permitted to remain amongst us, and had his health been at all adequate to the requirements of the office, there is no doubt that he would have risen to the highest honour which can be conferred on a Methodist minister. In the official rank next in order and importance to the President of the Conference—that of chairman of a district—he stood for several years past, and his decease will be mourned by every circuit and every congregation in the Newcastle district. A heavy loss it is which our Church at large has been called to sustain. In these times of ours, men of vigour and native force, of strong individuality, of combined intellectual and spiritual power, are not too numerous anywhere, and in Methodism such men can ill be spared. But it is the Lord's will; and the removal of our beloved brother will not prove an unmixed calamity if thousands and tens of thousands in our Israel be stirred up to seek more of that holiness and heavenly power of which, through the grace of God, he was so distinguished an example.

Wesleyan Training College, Westminster, July 3rd, 1873.

MY DEAR MRS. VASEY,

You ask me to write any impressions or recollections of your late husband, which I may think best and fittest to place on record. I regret that the pressure and whirl of engagements in which I live

(and which during the many weeks which have elapsed since I promised to do what I could to comply with your request, have not till now left me any remnant of time even to make a beginning) will prevent my giving such continuous attention to the subject, or so properly collecting my thoughts, as to do anything like justice to the memory my noble brother Vasey.

I remember him in London six and twenty years ago. Then how bright, how blythe, how intense and abundant, and aggressive a man he was; withal how frank and generous and benevolent. He seemed to have the life of several vigorous men in one. For several years after this period, his resources were much drawn upon for official desk work. He took a very active part in the earlier organisation of the day school department of Methodism, in connection with the late Mr. Scott and others. He exerted himself unsparingly on behalf of the Normal Institution at Westminster, and was one of the very best expositors of the true day-school ideal of teaching and influence that I ever listened to. His heart was indeed devoted to the work of Christian day-school teaching and training through all his course, to the very end. Whoever else might fall away from the true, high faith, as to this department of Christian work and of church duty, Thomas Vasey never did for an instant.

As secretary of the Committee of Privileges, also at a time when the responsibilities connected with that committee were painfully severe, Mr. Vasey, while he rendered great service to the Connexion laid a violent strain on his own health and strength. The consequence of his excessive official labours in London, followed as these were afterwards and everywhere by severe and exhausting spiritual efforts, both in preaching and in every kind of ministerial labour and care, such as our itinerant system involves, was shown by his repeated collapses in the course of his circuit work, and finally by his early breakdown and, as it seems to human eyes, premature death. During his years of active labour for Christ and his Church, Mr. Vasey's ministry became continually more spiritual and more intensely fervent. He was in the highest degree an evangelical preacher, his preaching being full of the atonement and grace of Christ; but he insisted not less npon the doctrine of Christian holiness, than on the doctrines of atonement and forgiveness. His preaching, from the structure of his mind, could not but be able, original, and practical. Perhaps Methodism never had a more original preacher. But his passionate earnestness, the vehement reality of his faith and pleading, in dealing with sinners, and pressing home upon Christians their actual duties, these were peculiarities in his preaching yet more striking than his originality. He took his hearers by force; the sluggish, the indifferent, the unawakened, under his preaching, suffered violence. But of all such matters as I have now been referring to (feeling I could not refrain from referring to them) Methodists in general, or at at any rate many both of the ministers and the people, could judge as well as myself. It is, perhaps, more to the purpose, to refer to Mr. Vasey as he appeared in the Conference, where I had the best opportunity of learning his character and quality.

What seemed to me to be the leading quality in Mr. Vasey, as a counsellor and debater in Conference, was his single-mindedness and

honesty of purpose and speech; next to this, and closely connected with it, I should place his generosity and nobleness of character; such was Mr. Vasey's honesty, such his public spirit, that, if he thought public duty demanded it, he would say, as I have heard him say, what was almost sure to grieve, and not unlikely to offend, men of high character and influence, men justly and widely honoured, and friends of Mr. Vasey himself. I remember some cases of this sort which most severely tested his courage and constancy of purpose; but only to render them more conspicuous. The test was the more severe, because Mr. Vasey was a man of deep, and, indeed, tender sympathies, and who could not inflict pain on any one without greatly paining himself. I confess that I, for one, could not but greatly honour the courage and high principle which actuated Mr. Vasey on such occasions. I have seen him, all alone, take positions which were certain to offend many, and which could in no way bring any advantage to himself—positions, also, which it must in every way have been painful to himself to occupy, constrained by a sense of public duty. Whether, in all these cases, his judgment was as true as his motive was pure, is really not a point which needs to be discussed. However this might be, I felt—and many, I am sure, must have felt, with me—that such high public principle as he showed was in itself noble and admirable.

Mr. Vasey was, through life, independent; but he ever kept aloof from the spirit and tactics of faction. His personal attachment to the most eminent and trusted among his senior brethren was very warm. Independent as he was, he supported, with all his power, not only the essential principles of Methodism, but the chief officers of the Connexion when they were bitterly assailed in troublous times. He could criticise severely; he could lead an opposition with exuberant energy, but he was incapable, equally, of malice and intrigue.

He was a man, not only of a frank, but of a loving spirit. I remember, years ago, that he and I had differed warmly on a question then before the Conference. I had myself, both publicly and privately, expressed, with emphasis, my opposition to his views. He came privately to me shortly afterwards, referred to family affliction, which at the time I was suffering, said how well he knew, from his own experience, the difficulty of preserving equanimity on public questions, when, at the same time, the heart and mind were burdened with family trouble, and so, by private gentleness and kindness, prevented what might, perhaps, have led to some estrangement. I mention this because it discovers the true spirit of a man who, in public discussions, showed intrepidity, and occasionally vehemence, such as are not always associated with a spirit of private and personal regard, altogether candid, and sympathetic, and generous.

I could not, indeed, imagine a man more free from anything like selfishness or personal acrimony, or pique, or suspiciousness, than my late dear and noble friend. Seldom has there been a man whose opinions were so decided, whose convictions of duty were so peremptory, who in public speaking was so ready, so spontaneous, so vigorous, and often vehement, who was at the same time so loving in spirit and so entirely free from private animosity.

Mr. Vasey was one of the most powerful speakers in the Conference, and was, I think, almost without exception, the ablest and readiest in immediate unpremeditated reply. I have known him, more than once, rise on the instant to reply to a speech, of the course and character of which he could have had no previous intimation or idea whatever, and deliver a reply which for clear consecutiveness, completeness, and crushing power, was a perfect marvel.

Mr. Vasey's principles were those of open constitutionalism in administration and government. He had no sympathy with what was destructive. He was not pre-eminently even a constructive reformer, although he had a mind open to the consideration of all improvements, as he had a keen sense of all abuses. But he was severely opposed to anything which seemed to him to savour of concealment, or of bureau government, or of too much management. I did not always agree with his specific views or fears as to such points, but his fundamental principles were wholesome and good; and if his views were sometimes erroneous or extreme, they were never held in bitterness, and they represented principles so important and beneficial, that even some exaggeration on behalf of them might well be forgiven. Mr. Vasey was an honest man, and therefore capable of being convinced when he had manifestly gone too far, and a high theory of administration or of government is beneficial, even though at points it may be impracticable or inapplicable.

In Methodism, legislation and discussion are actually conducted quite as much in Committees as in the Conference. One of Mr. Vasey's latest great efforts was a speech on the subject of national education, which he delivered at a large convention of ministers and laymen, held in London in Nov., 1869. He had travelled through the night to attend this meeting. The subjects to be considered had occupied him through all the night, and more or less for days before. His heart was very full indeed. With him the Christian education of the young by the Church had been a life passion. He conceived that the rights and duty of the Church, the rights and Christian necessities of the children of England, the Christian future of the nation, were at stake. Those who heard can never forget the wonderful address which, under such circumstances, he delivered. It was full of earnest argument and impassioned pleading. Nothing, indeed, so far as I remember, ever so powerfully took hold of Mr. Vasey as the cause of Christian day-schools, and he was never moved by any matter so deeply as by the fear lest the day-school instruction and organisation of England should be separated from direct Christian influences and distinctly Christian organisations. In his special view of this question, he separated himself from some esteemed brethren with whom he had been much accustomed to act, but he adhered to the principles which for twenty-five years he had professed and most ably supported. It is much to be regretted that the proceedings of the committee to which I have referred were not published; those of the committees on the same subject held in the following summer (1870), were reported and published, as have been the proceedings of the Convention held last December. But at the first of the three gatherings, held more than three years ago, speeches were delivered, including Mr. Vasey's, not equalled at either of the assemblies which

followed, for earnestness and eloquence. That was the meeting which opened the question, and dealt with first principles. The meetings that followed dealt more with the existing situation, as defined by the legislation which was brought in in 1870.

But here I am diverging from the subject, which is the character of your late dear husband, and must now close these hasty notes. cannot do so, however, without referring to one other matter, with which you are best acquainted. For twenty years before his death, Mr. Vasey carried with him always a deep chastening sorrow. Your protracted and disabling affliction was this sorrow. You know, as no one else can, how much love and tenderness was born of this sorrow. But even to those who knew little of Mr. Vasey, except outside of his home, it was evident how richly his domestic affliction had been sanctified to his good. Cheerful he was through it all, a natural blytheness which might have become outbreaking merriment was subdued but never submerged; meantime all the unselfishness, sympathy, and thoughtfulness for others, of which there was such a fund in his nature, was drawn forth into continual exercise. The tones of his nature were deepened, and all its genuine tenderness was called forth. His whole character was refined and elevated. Few men lived habitually in so spiritual a region of thought and feeling, and in a state of such happy readiness for his change as Mr. Vasey. His own precarious state of health, of late years, no doubt had much to do with this. He expected sudden death. But his long association with a beloved and continually suffering wife, contributed perhaps yet more, under the influence of Divine grace, to this result.

Hoping you will pardon my long delay, which has indeed been unavoidable, and the necessary hastiness of this imperfect sketch,

I remain,
Dear Mrs. Vasey,
Yours very truly,
JAMES H. RIGG.

Pickering, October 6th, 1871.

DEAR MRS. VASEY,—

As one of the ministers whose honour and privilege it has been to travel during the last few years in the district over which your most excellent and now sainted husband presided, and in which he finished his active ministry, I cannot but yield to the promptings of my heart, and inform you how deep is my personal regret on receiving the intelligence of his decease; and how sincere and thorough is my sympathy with you and your dear family, in the heavy loss which you have thus sustained. I pray God that He may both sustain and comfort you in the midst of that sorrow which nature must exact under such painful dispensations of Divine Providence, as that through which you and your family have been called to pass.

I was anxiously hoping that his life was yet to be spared to his family and the Church, and world, all of which, to our short-sighted wisdom, seemed to have almost indispensable need of him; but the Master, whom He has followed fully, and served faithfully, had, in His inscrutable, but unerring wisdom, and unfailing wisdom, seen

fit to say, "It is enough!" and to crown his life of mercies with a triumphant end.

Mr. Vasey's exalted godliness as a man, his heavenly-mindedness, his conspicuous self-denial, his burning zeal for God's glory, his ceaselessly intense earnestness and solicitude for the salvation of souls, as well as the fatherly tenderness with which he watched over the ministerial conduct of his younger brethren in the district, stimulating them to a fuller consecration of themselves to God, by the assurance that he statedly brought each of them by name before God at the mercy-seat, have all made an indelible impression upon my mind and heart, so that I could not but venerate and love him while here, and never on earth shall cease to venerate and love his memory, now that he is gone.

I bless God that I was ever in any way associated with him. It is now between ten and eleven years since I had first the privilege of making his acquaintance. He was then travelling in the Stoke Newington Circuit, and, being indisposed, I had been sent to take an appointment for him on the Sunday previous, and was on this second occasion on the spot for the same purpose, when he entered the vestry himself, and although besought by the stewards (on the ground of his physical weakness) not to preach, much as in itself they would rejoice to hear him again, yet preach he would; and that evening I listened to one of the most sublime, majestic, and powerful sermons, from the text, "Fear not, I am He that liveth and was dead," &c., which it was ever my privilege, either since or before, to hear, or which I ever expect to hear in time to come. Since that period I knew of your dear husband as a man of high and varied talent, of great parts, and of pulpit power. But it was not until it was my happiness to sit at his feet (as Chairman of the Newcastle district) that I learnt to revere and love him, for the thorough kindness and goodness of his heart, and for his unostentatious but transcendant holiness.

Mr. Vasey possessed the power, in an unusual degree, of communicating to his brethren, at the district meetings, the fire and the fervour of his own soul, in connection with the great work in which we were all engaged; and this, I can testify, he never failed to do in the Newcastle district meeting, whenever the state of the work of God was the topic under consideration. Twice a year, in May and September, were we all thus under God revived and refreshed in our own souls, and strengthened in our work, through his instrumentality; and the last May meeting at Gateshead I shall never forget. Mr. Vasey was one of the holiest and best men it has ever been my happiness to know; and the Church which he served and adorned, and the younger part of the ministry which he has so much blessed, cannot but, with your dear family, feel sorely bereaved. But I trust the world and the Church shall yet hear more of such a life.

My dear wife joins me in the deepest and most Christian sympathy with you in your sorrow, and in earnest prayer that the God of all grace and consolation may peculiarly bless and comfort your hearts,

Believe me, dear Mrs. Vasey, to be

Yours sincerely,

W. WATSON.

18, *Acomb-street, Manchester, 7th October*, 1871.

DEAR MRS. VASEY,

Had I not been confined to my house, and chiefly to my bed by illness, with one day's exception, since I heard of your great and irreparable loss, I would have written earlier, to assure you of my deep sympathy with you in your present circumstances of bereavement and affliction.

Ever since I became acquainted with your late beloved husband, and yet more and more since I knew him better, I have respected and honoured his great ability, his rare and self-denying devotion to his ministerial work, his varied labours (often too great for his strength), and his purity of purpose and aim, and I have felt thankful often to hear of his public success.

That such a man should have warm friends, on the one hand, and sometimes stout opponents on the other, might be expected from the constitution of human nature; but none who occasionally differed with him in judgment could doubt his ability or his sincerity. And now that his work is done, tens of thousands will feel that a prince and a great man is fallen in Israel. Let thanks be to God, he fell in triumph, and has now joined the ranks of those who "have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

May "the God of all grace comfort and succour you in all your affliction, and daily fill you with the hope of rejoining him, in the Lord's own time, among that spotless company," to part no more!

My dear wife desires to unite with me in affectionate condolence, and

I remain, dear Mrs. Vasey,
Yours very sincerely,
J. BEDFORD.

Clapham, London, S.W., October 13th, 1871.

MY DEAR MRS. VASEY,

There are some sorrows too deep to be hastily uttered or intruded upon; of that which has befallen you, one can judge from its effect upon oneself. True, it is your sorrow and that of your children, but also is it my sorrow and that of mine, and of the churches far and wide. Your now happy husband was a man who made one love and respect him by irresistible forces of attraction and worth. The day when first I met him on the gallery in Cherry-street Chapel, Birmingham, during the Conference of 1844, is fresh before me now: we sat side by side, and then the impression taken of him was such as made me rejoice when, twelve months later, it proved that he was to succeed me at City-road. In the sorrowful times of 1850 we made the tour of the Lynn side of the Norwich and Lynn District together, and his faith, courage, vigour, and zeal were always good to see. I do not exactly remember when it was, but some time about that term, that one night walking together into Mr. Brown's, at King's-square, he seemed low, and told me that you were ill. "I shall lose her," he said, with a tone I never forgot since, and of which I have often been reminded by your sufferings. How often has that word

returned to me since I found that you were more likely, after all these years, to lose him. During the last Leeds Conference what I saw of him at Harrogate greatly increased my sense of his devotedness to God, and of the combination in him of a state of grace unusually high, with an exterior bearing, as far as possible, removed from any airs of sanctity. What untiring zeal for the Lord's work, what supreme abnegation of even the most lawful thoughts of himself or his own, what unconsciousness of either! an unconsciousness on his part so complete that only by evidence of slowly unfolding facts did others awake to the rare virtues covered by that everyday and off-hand manner.

Perhaps at the Cork Conference, two years ago, I directly saw and felt most of his evangelistic power. He and Mr. Hall seemed to be both blessed with special blessing for that season, and surely the Lord did work in him and with him, and by him. And now he rests and you are alone. But rare will be the blessing on you, and on his and your children. The prayers and blessings of thousands of God's people meet upon your heads. You will be greatly comforted and enabled now to glorify God, as in the past you have been enabled. And the church—bereaved indeed. May God, who blessed him, bless many more, and raise up unto us mighty men to work for the kingdom of Jesus.

With loving regards and sympathy from my wife and children,

Yours, dear Mrs. Vasey,

Affectionately,

Mrs. Thomas Vasey. Wm. Arthur.

A few notes of Mr. Vasey's funeral have come to hand by the pen of one fully able to furnish correct details of the occasion. Though we have scrupulously desired to avoid everything in the pages of this book which might savour in the least degree of ostentation, we do not feel at liberty to withhold these particulars, lest in doing so, we should fail to do justice to him who in death was so greatly honored, and also forego the opportunity of encouraging those who in their self-sacrificing course are treading in the same steps in the cause of the Master who delights to honour his faithful servants.

I do not remember, under any circumstances, so universal an expression of sorrow as passed over the face of society in Leeds, when it became known that the Rev. Thomas Vasey was dead. The whole Church was pervaded by a deep sense of a great loss, and to those to

whom he had been made a blessing there seemed to be no consolation, until it became known that the family purposed to lay his remains in the grave at Woodhouse Cemetery, Leeds. This caused a feeling of grateful satisfaction, inasmuch as it would afford them an opportunity of paying to one whom they had admired and loved so much the last tribute of respect.

On the morning of the funeral several ministers and friends met in Mr. Reed's Mission Room, Harrogate, and thence proceeded to join the funeral cortège. They accompanied the mourners a short distance out of the town, and then returned, some to their own homes, and others to take the train for Leeds in order there to join the procession. When the funeral carriages reached Chapeltown, where Mr. Vasey opened his Gospel commission on his being appointed to Leeds, numbers of the inhabitants were awaiting their arrival in tearful silence, and from fifty to sixty followed draped in mourning. On reaching Roscoe-place Chapel, they were met by a number of gentlemen, officers of the church, &c., who also formed in file, and so respected was Mr. Vasey that before they reached Brunswick Chapel the train numbered above 500 people. When they passed up Brunswick-street, through an avenue of people, clothed more like mourners than spectators, and moved towards the chapel, the procession stood back on each side like a noble Christian army in mournful silence, as the remains of their beloved and former pastor passed between them; and when the corpse was removed from the hearse a deep and solemn feeling thrilled through that vast multitude, expressed in sighs of strong emotion. After the mourners were placed in the pews, a short time elapsed before the large mass of people (above 2,000) could be accommodated, and then, in the midst of the most profound silence, the Rev. J. Farrar commenced reading the beautiful burial service, "Lord, thou hast been our refuge," with such pathos that a sense of God's presence seemed to pervade the whole assembly, and occasionally the stillness was broken by ejaculations coming from overflowing hearts. The service being finished, the Rev. A. McAulay delivered an address, and while he spoke the pent-up feelings of the congregation found vent, and it seemed as if the whole of their sympathetic nature had burst forth and only found relief in sobs and tears. The Rev. J. H. Lord concluded the service by offering prayer for the family; and as the mourners moved down the aisle, the organ in its deep diapason notes gave out "The Dead March in Saul."

The ministers and officers of the Church formed into order and the procession moved slowly up Woodhouse-lane, where the mass of people seemed to culminate, and were estimated at above 3,000 persons from all parts of the country—Bradford, Halifax, Bramley, Wakefield, Selby, Hull, Newcastle, &c., &c.

In that large concourse might be distinguished two figures draped in black, walking arm in arm close to the hearse as if chief mourners. Who are they? They are two beloved sons in the Gospel *won* from the boards of the *theatre;* the one a scene shifter, the other an actor; to both of whom Mr. Vasey was made a blessing spiritually, and afterwards assisted them to secure situations suited to their new state as Christians. And now they have come some fifteen miles to pay their last loving tribute to him whom they will ever esteem as their father in Christ;

and they declare there will be more such fruit made manifest in the day when his sheaves are gathered up. The service at the grave being read by the Rev. J. Pearson, the vast assemblage, after taking a last look at the coffin, left the remains of him whom they so dearly loved on earth to repose side by side with his beloved children until the day of the resurrection, when the graves shall open, and they shall come forth unto life everlasting.

THE END.